WHERE ARE ALL THOSE JOBS? *by Adam Lapin*

NEW MASSES

MAY 13, 1941
FIFTEEN CENTS

HOW STRONG IS THE RED ARMY?

The answer based on the testimony of a noted military authority, Max Werner

MAKING THE POOR POORER

What the new taxes do to your budget. *By J. R. Wilson*

NO MARKET FOR ATROCITIES

By Ruth McKenney

Portrait of a Clan: William Blake reviews Harvey O'Connor's "The Astors"

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I DIDN'T REALIZE THINGS WERE THAT BAD UNTIL I READ RUTH MCKENNEY'S LETTER. AM SENDING YOU TWENTY FIVE DOLLARS AS MY CONTRIBUTION TO KEEP MAGAZINE AFLOAT THESE DAYS WHEN ALL OF US NEED IT MOST. AM TALKING TO MY FRIENDS AND HOLDING PARTY TO RAISE MORE FUNDS. KEEP IT GOING. WE'RE WITH YOU=

HERBERT COOPER.

IN YOUR HANDS

This telegram was one of 479 responses to Ruth McKenney's letter, printed on the opposite page, which was sent to our subscribers. Those replies literally saved the life of New Masses for that week. We wish we had the space to publish other telegrams and letters. They tell better than any words of ours what New Masses means to the people who don't want war, who want a decent, democratic America.

We are publishing Ruth McKenney's letter because her urgent appeal once more describes the actual present situation of the magazine. We said last week that we must have $5,000 by May 15. Of that, $2,532 was received in the past week, bringing the total to date to $14,958. We must have $2,468 more during the next week to remain alive.

Consider Ruth's letter a personal message to you. Four hundred and seventy-nine readers are but a fraction of our total circulation. If each of our readers answered—if only half answered—we could close this drive triumphantly, assured of the $25,000 we must have this spring to pull the magazine through the year. If you are not one of the 479 who have already responded, will you wire, airmail, or personally deliver to our office whatever you can? We know you will not fail us.

The Editors.

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NEW MASSES

Editors BARBARA GILES A. B. MAGIL RUTH McKENNEY BRUCE MINTON
JOSEPH NORTH JOSEPH STAROBIN JOHN STUART
CARL A. BRISTEL *President & Treasurer*

461 Fourth Avenue New York City CAledonia 5-3076

Dear Friend:

The truth must come on time.

I wish I could think of fancy phrases, but I can't. New Masses has got just enough money for another issue. Unless we get money now, fast, New Masses will be finished. Unless we have funds for next week, New Masses is all through. And if that happens, America will have lost its only magazine that tells the truth now, ON TIME.

Woodrow Wilson described the first world war as a "purely commercial conflict." But the war was over when he told the truth; the dead were buried; the maimed, the shellshocked were already installed in the bleak hospitals where they would spend the rest of their lives. In 1917, when it mattered, President Wilson called on the young men of America to die, if need be, to "make the world safe for democracy."

The New Republic called for a declaration of war as early as 1916. England, it seemed, was battling for the dignity of man. In 1920, the New Republic began to tell part of the truth, and for twenty years, right up to the present war, the New Republic cried mea culpa, we have sinned, the World War was a sordid struggle for markets instead of a crusade for freedom. But the truth in the New Republic came too late for Johnny Jones of Utica, New York or Freddy Franklin of East Cleveland, Ohio. For Johnny had his bowels blown out by a casual shell and took eleven hours of agony to die -- in 1917. And Freddy Franklin stumbles around an asylum for the blind.

The truth, you see, must come on time.

This is an appeal for money, dear friend, an appeal asking you to save New Masses, the only magazine in America which told the truth about the last war and tells the truth about the new war, tells it now, ON TIME.

This is a letter to keep New Masses alive. Asking for money is at best a difficult and awkward thing. An appeal for funds directed to New Masses readers is a doubly hard task, for you have received these appeals for years and you have responded. You have kept this magazine alive.

And yet we must ask you again. The advertising boycott has gotten worse. The government has made our creditors so uneasy they give us a tough financial row to hoe. We have explained how each year to make ends meet we must appeal for $25,000 in contributions. That is part of the price we have to pay for refusing to compromise our position.

If you care about Freddy Franklin and Johnny Jones, please send whatever you can, fifty cents or five hundred dollars, whatever you can spare, now -- ON TIME.

The truth cannot wait.

Yours very truly,

Ruth McKenney

Ruth McKenney

(Please turn to page 25.)

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HOW STRONG IS THE RED ARMY?

The typewriter generals have offered their phony estimates. New Masses presents the testimony of the military authority, Max Werner, on the Soviet's power in arms and men. Excerpts from his new book.

JUST how strong is the Red Army? That's still a question which many people have not answered for themselves, a question that's always worth answering. Back in 1937 and '38, many liberals charged that the eradication of the Trotskyist and Bukharinist elements (imperialism's "fifth column") had fatally weakened the Soviet economy and its fighting forces. Many people believed that the USSR decided to stay out of the war on account of military unpreparedness. Col. Charles Lindbergh, it will be recalled, did his bit toward the disaster of Munich by circulating the story of Soviet weakness in the air. Even today many American columnists such as Walter Lippmann, who pride themselves on their immunity to Nazi propaganda, nevertheless continue to believe that Soviet diplomacy is dictated by fear of other powers, a fear which presumably lies in weakness.

In his volume just published, *Battle for the World* (Modern Age Books), the noted military observer, Max Werner, tells quite a different story. He has the highest respect for the Soviet armed strength, and devotes a whole chapter to the Finnish war with lavish, although critical praise for the Soviet military achievement. Werner's testimony is doubly authoritative in view of his previous volume, *The Military Strength of the Powers*. His opinion is even more significant since he is no particular adherent of the Soviet Union and definitely not a Communist. In fact, his new book supports the Anglo-American war bloc, and it is with their problems that Werner definitely identifies himself.

Discussing the pre-war years, here is what Werner has to say:

"Generally speaking, it can be stated that Soviet armaments doubled during the years 1937-38—industrial production of armaments as well as the arms equipment of the Red Army. Several circumstances go to prove this. In 1937 the Soviet military budget amounted to 22.4 billion rubles; in 1938 to 34,000,000,000; in 1939 to 45,000,000,000 (including the commissariats for war industry). In 1938 Soviet armament production was increased by thirty-six to forty percent over 1937; in 1939 by an even higher percentage. For the end of the third Five Year Plan the annual increment in war industry is scheduled to exceed thirty percent, a threefold increase in five years.

"These relative figures assume real meaning when the armament efforts of the Soviet Union in the years from 1935 to 1937, and the extent of its armament achievements in 1937, are considered. The only valid testimony is that of really qualified eye-witnesses, such as the heads of the great foreign military missions that actually spent time in Russia, and top-flight international authorities on military affairs. The statements of the following can be regarded as thoroughly competent and trustworthy: the French generals Loizeau and Schweissgut, who were the heads of the French military mission in the Soviet Union in 1935 and 1936, the former as Quartermaster General, the second as Deputy Chief of the French General Staff; members of the French air mission that visited the Soviet Union in 1936, chiefly the famous French aircraft designers Breguet and Poetz, who have given their names to the French plane types; Boussoutrot, chairman of the Aeronautics Committee of the Chamber of Deputies; and Andraud, under-secretary in the French Air Ministry; the British General Wavell, now commander-in-chief in the Near East, and Colonel Martel, both members of the British military mission of 1936; the Czech General Luza, head of the Czech military mission of 1936; and finally the German generals Guderian and Bulow, and the leading British military writers General Groves and Captain Liddell Hart.

"Here is a summary of the reports of these men, checked against international military literature: About 1937 the Red Army, in total number of divisions of all branches of the service, and specifically in the number of war planes and tanks—the modern weapons of offense—stood first in Europe, surpassing even the German army. General Guderian (the hero, by the way, of the campaigns in Poland and France) insisted as early as 1935 that the Soviet Union had 10,000 tanks. General Bulow surmised that the Soviet air force numbered 8,000 planes in 1936. The fact that in 1939 Soviet armament production had doubled the output of 1937 undoubtedly indicates that on the eve of the war the Soviet Union was still ahead of Germany. . . .

"In this connection some additional facts are highly illuminating. About 1937-38 the numerical peacetime strength of the Red Army was brought to some 2,000,000 men organized solely into cadre divisions with a term of service of at least two years. The last remaining short-term territorial divisions, that is to say, those having the character of a militia, which altogether formed twenty-three percent of the infantry divisions, were transformed into standard divisions. This indicates that, on the one hand, the Red Army command was determined to maintain a wise numerical margin over the next ranking army in Europe—that of Germany—while on the other hand it was rapidly increasing the number of fully trained reserves—from 650,000 a year in 1935 to 1,000,000 a year in 1939.

"In his report to the Communist Party Congress in March 1939, Voroshilov presented some very important data about the relative strength of the Soviet and German air forces. According to him the bomb salvo (the total weight of the bombs which the air force can drop at any one given time) of the Soviet air force was twice that of the German, twenty-five percent greater than that of the combined German and Italian air forces, and about ten percent greater than that of the combined German, Italian, and Japanese air forces. Possibly Voroshilov somewhat underrated the bomb salvo of Goering's *Luftwaffe*. But the comparison shows the armament standards which the Soviet air force had set itself.

"The Red Army command aspired to a 100-percent superiority over the German air force, to be stronger in the air than any possible coalition of enemies (in 1939 that meant the group adhering to the Anti-Comintern Pact). Whether the Soviet Union's superiority in 1939 was actually double or whether it was somewhat less, the Red Air Force certainly had a considerable advantage over the *Luftwaffe* in 1939. There has been no information available on the quality of Soviet aircraft since 1936-37, when Soviet military aircraft participated in the Spanish civil war. There are opinions on record that the quality of the Red Air Force has not improved in comparison with earlier years, when no other power surpassed it in quality. But according to Voroshilov's statements the Red Army had a considerable number of pursuit and bombing planes with speeds in excess of 300 miles an hour. This would compare not unfavorably with the peak performances of the best German and British warcraft.

"Soviet military literature has set up gigantic standards of saturation with aircraft for an attacking army of shock troops. *Voyennaya Mysl,* leading Red Army organ on military science, demands an average of 3,500 military aircraft for two armies of nine army corps, conducting an offensive. (Kovalev, 'Preparation by the Air Force for an Offensive,' *Voyennaya Mysl,* July 1940, p. 77.) No less than one-fifth of the Soviet air fleet is composed of heavy bombers, a higher percentage than in any other air force in the world. Soviet heavy bombers, even those of the older type (the TB-6), although their range is somewhat smaller, are as fast as the American 'flying fortresses' of the Boeing type, and their bomb load is greater. The newer Soviet heavy bombers of the Bolchovitinov type have an even greater bomb load (four tons and up) and a higher ceiling—they hold the world altitude record for ten-ton loads.

"In the matter of the tank arm the advantage of the Red Army over the German army was undisputed in 1939. That fact was fully acknowledged on the German side. In September 1939 the German magazine on armored warfare, *Panzertruppe,* wrote:

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On the one hand, Russia has tank formations after the fashion of our own "Speed Divisions," which are in a position to undertake large operative tasks; on the other hand, it permanently assigns four tank battalions to each infantry division. Only a country with such vast resources in raw materials at its disposal can afford such generous assignment of armored vehicles to the smallest operative units.

"The newer tank types of the Red Army, dating from the years 1938-39, have never been surpassed by the German tanks and are far superior to the tanks of the Allies. The new Soviet tank for accompanying infantry has stronger armor than the similar French Renault tank and three times its speed. The new medium-heavy Soviet tank of thirty tons has the strongest armament of its category—three cannon and four machine guns.

"Similarly, the arms equipment of the Soviet infantry is of supreme importance. According to Voroshilov's statements, the total fire power of a Soviet army corps is about twenty-five percent higher than that of a German corps (seventy-nine tons of shells, mines, grenades, and bullets capable of being discharged within one minute, as against a German 'minute salvo' of fifty-nine tons). Even though the German fire power should prove to have been somewhat underrated, there can be no doubt about the extraordinarily high arms standards of the Soviet infantry. Even were the Red Army infantry armed on a par with the German infantry, the Red Army would always have a quantitative superiority in arms, since it will always have a larger number of army corps than the German army."

By way of concluding his review of Soviet strength prior to the outbreak of the war, Max Werner declares categorically:

"All in all, it can be stated that Soviet armament, which had already attained a very high level in 1937, was continued at such a pace that just before the outbreak of war, the Soviet Union was the most strongly armed country in Europe."

What, then, is the present strength of the Red Army, Navy, and Air Force? Writing during the last winter, on the basis of the experiences of the past year, Werner has the following to offer:

"In judging the present state of the Red Army it is necessary to discard two prejudices. The first has arisen under the impact of the *Wehrmacht's* mighty victories in France. It holds that in the event of war the Red Army would be defeated by the *Wehrmacht* with the same ease as the French army. Mr. Calvin Hoover, for example, is willing 'to presage a Soviet resistance as successful even as that of Poland and France. The rapidity with which German columns would probably sweep from the frontier of White Russia to Vladivostok could be expected to add new laurels to German armies.' (New York *Times Magazine Section,* Nov. 24, 1940.)

"This assertion overlooks one important circumstance. France was beaten quickly and overwhelmingly because it lacked arms—especially modern offensive arms—reserves, and a

RED ARMY INFANTRY *in marching array. They know what they're defending.*

MECHANIZED DIVISIONS *roll through Red Square. Multiply by the thousands.*

TRAINING *includes intellectual relaxation. Lenin looks down proudly.*

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command thinking along modern lines. The Red Army, on the contrary, possesses in abundance precisely what the French army lacked—arms, reserves, and training for modern warfare. The war in the West would have had a very different end, had France possessed the masses of men and arms at the disposal of the Soviet Union.

"The other prejudice admits that the Red Army possesses powerful arms and huge reserves of manpower, but insists that its strategy is passive, suitable only for successful defense. This assertion too is untrue. The Red Army is trained and intended for the strategic offensive. The Soviet doctrine of war is as modern and aggressive as the German. Indeed, in its main outlines it was developed before the German. Soviet strategy's picture of the modern battle of materiel in a war of movement was the first to be presented in Europe, long before Germany's. . . .

"As far as arms are concerned, the relationship of forces appears to be as follows: In the air, the *Wehrmacht* can at best attain parity with the Red Army. The Red Army, on the other hand, possesses the stronger tank arm, and, in general, stronger arms for a modern war of movement, as well as a larger infantry.

"German military literature itself has for years insisted that, except for the United States, only the Soviet Union is capable of unlimited warplane production. The leading German air expert, Colonel von Bulow, later air attache in Rome, wrote:

> Today there are only two countries in the world which are completely economically independent and in a position to produce airplanes and air engines on a mass scale indefinitely, namely Russia and America.

"He was convinced that the Soviet air arm was not only the strongest in the world, but that even in the future no other air arm or coalition of air arms would ever be able to outdistance it:

> In a very few years' time Russia's air fleet will probably consist of 10,000 planes, and it will be so strong that no single air power, or even combination of powers, can equal it. *(Militarwissenschaftliche Rundschau,* December 1935.)

"A year later, toward the end of 1936, he [von Bulow] had this to say of Soviet warplane production:

> The figures prove that within a few years Soviet Russia has far outstripped the productive possibilities of all other countries, including the United States. It is hardly likely that any other country will ever be in a position to catch up with Soviet Russia in this particular branch of the armament race. *(Militarwissenschaftliche Rundschau,* December 1936.)

At this point, Werner enters into a specific comparison of the German and Soviet strength. Although, elsewhere in his volume he disparages the idea of an imminent clash between Germany and the Soviet Union, he nevertheless finds it valuable in estimating Soviet strength to make comparisons with Germany. Naturally, he overlooks any number of political and economic factors, but his military and strategic judgments are interesting:

"Earlier . . . figures made public by Voroshilov in March 1939 were cited. According to them, the bomb salvo of the Soviet air force was supposed to be twice as great as that of the German. Possibly those data somewhat underestimated the combat power of the German *Luftwaffe.* There is little doubt that since 1939 the German aircraft industry has put forward tremendous efforts—as has its Soviet counterpart. It can even be admitted that in part the newest German type planes are qualitatively superior to the Soviet types. This superiority is not likely to prove decisive. The thing to remember is that the German *Luftwaffe,* even with all its resources strained to the limit, can at best attain a strength merely equal to the Soviet air force. And two circumstances militate in favor of the Russian air arm. It has nearer and safer bases for operations in Eastern Europe; and, furthermore, Germany is far more vulnerable from the air than the Soviet Union. Not a single Soviet war industry lies within German bombing range; while Vienna, Berlin, the German armaments industries in Czechoslovakia, German industry in Central Germany, and Germany's aircraft industry in Northeastern Germany all lie within range of the Soviet air arm.

"Soviet tank superiority is very great and cannot be made up for by the Third Reich under any circumstances. The present commander of the British armored corps, General Martel, in September 1936, as a member of the British military mission, witnessed the Red Army maneuvers in the Minsk military district. According to his report, from 1,200 to 1,400 tanks took part in these maneuvers. It is quite certain that not all the tank units of the Minsk district took part. At the time the Soviet Union had three military districts along the western frontier—those of Leningrad, Minsk, and Kiev. That of Kiev was far stronger than that of Minsk, while the Leningrad military district was weaker in numbers of troops. Thus there must have been some 6,000 tanks along the western Soviet frontier, and perhaps some 10,000 in European Russia altogether. In the super-battle of the West the Germans used a total of but 7,500 tanks, and German sources indicate that this constituted just about the entire tank resources of the *Wehrmacht.* In other words, as early as 1936 the tank inventory of the Red Army exceeded that of the *Wehrmacht* in 1940. Between 1936 and 1941, however, the tank arm of the Red Army has been doubled at the very least. Qualitatively too it was replaced and improved. This is what the Finnish general Oehquist, who commanded an important sector of the Mannerheim Line, said of the Soviet Union's use of tanks: 'The Russians had a large number of heavy and light tanks. These tanks were of the newest type, of the latest models known to the world.'

"Long before the Germans, the Red Army familiarized itself with the strategy and tactics of mobile, mechanized warfare, and it received the necessary material instrument for this purpose long before the Germans. It was precisely on the basis of his impressions at the Soviet maneuvers that General Martel became convinced of the effectiveness of tanks as offensive weapons. And at a session of the Royal United Service Institution on Jan. 20, 1937, he recommended to the British army as an example for tank war the Red Army, not the German army, which was then only in the experimental stages, as far as larger tank units were concerned. General Martel said at the time:

> There are many officers who consider that the day of the tanks has already passed and that anti-tank weapons have now reached a stage where they will be able to deal with the tanks comparatively easily. If there are officers present here today who are of that mind, I would ask them to accompany me in spirit to the Russian maneuvers which I had the great fortune to see last autumn. The total number of tanks employed on these maneuvers was some 1,200 to 1,400. . . . The Russians have made immense strides in this direction. Their conscript armies are drawn from raw peasants and in two years they turn them into a tank force that can drive and maintain their tanks in first-class condition. These tank forces were most impressive, and the sight of these large numbers of tanks moving over the field of operations as opposed to a consideration of paper tank brigades with which we have so far had to be content, could hardly have failed to impress the most stubborn opponent of modernized warfare. *(Journal of Royal United Service Institution,* May 1937.)

"From the military viewpoint, the Soviet Union's key position in the second world war rests on the fact that the Red Army is the only army in the world that has the same structure as the *Wehrmacht*—the combination of a powerful land army with a powerful air force. German war doctrine is convinced that the reason why the Third Reich is militarily superior to the Anglo-Saxon powers lies in the fact that the structure of the *Wehrmacht* (land army plus air force) has a higher strategic effectiveness than the structure of the armed forces of the Anglo-Saxon countries (sea power plus air force). But the Third Reich has no monopoly on a strong armed force of the continental type, since the Red Army too is an army intended and suitable for large-scale continental operations.

"The key position of the Soviet Union in the second world war is further determined by the fact that the Red Army is the only great army in the world that stands directly on the German frontier, relatively close to vital German centers. The problem of a return to the Continent—the most difficult problem facing British strategy—does not exist for the Red Army."

These, then, are the observations of a non-Soviet critic on the actual state of Soviet strength. A long time ago, Friedrich Engels predicted that socialism would demonstrate its superiority over capitalism not only in the production of goods, in eliminating all the miseries and frustrations which capitalism visits on the human race, but also—if necessary—in military matters. Reading Mr. Werner's partial [illegible], who can doubt this any longer?

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MAKING THE POOR POORER

The low-income groups get soaked hardest in the tax plans of the administration and the congressional "experts." How to cut consumption by robbing the wage envelope.

IF THE Treasury Department's new tax proposals become law, a single person earning slightly under twenty dollars a week would have his income tax increased 625 percent, a married man without dependents earning forty-five dollars a week would have his tax raised 1,200 percent. But the tax bill of a married man with an income of $500,000 a year would be boosted only 4.8 percent, while a person in the million-dollar class would have to pay only 2.8 percent more than formerly.

And if these tax proposals become law, you will pay an additional 1½ cents on every pack of cigarettes, one cent on every bottled soft drink, an additional penny on a gallon of gasoline, a penny on a ten-cent movie, a five percent tax on candy and chewing gum, an additional one dollar a barrel on beer, a five percent tax on your telephone bill, two cents on every 1,000 matches, and new or increased levies on many other items.

Taxes are the price we pay for government. There are two basic questions to be asked about any tax program: are the activities it will finance necessary and desirable? is the method of taxation such as to distribute the burden equitably, that is, in accordance with ability to pay? By the way it answers these questions a government reveals its social character. The new tax proposals of the Roosevelt administration show that the reactionary purpose for which these taxes are to be imposed: prosecution of a war in the interest of big business, has dictated the method of taxation: the placing of a disproportionate share of the burden on the low- and middle-income groups. This is clearly evident in both the tax plan presented by the Treasury Department and the alternate proposals made by the House Ways and Means Committee.

The Treasury plan is designed to raise about $3,500,000,000. This is the largest tax program in American history. Of this sum approximately $1,517,000,000 is to be raised from increases in the individual income tax rates, $1,235,000,000 from new excise taxes on articles of consumption, $935,500,000 from increased corporation taxes (a six percent surtax on corporate net incomes and increases in the excess profits tax), and about $353,000,000 from rises in the estate and gift taxes. In addition, Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau proposed a reduction of about $1,000,000,000 in social expenditures through cuts in farm aid, the National Youth Administration, and the CCC.

Under the Treasury plan the lowest income tax bracket would pay a surtax (a tax in addition to the one already imposed) of eleven percent. This would make the actual tax 16.5 percent since the normal tax is four percent, the surtax eleven percent, and there is also a supertax which is ten percent of the income tax. Here is how the income tax proposals would affect a single person without dependents (the personal exemption for this category is $800):

Net Income Before Personal Exemption	*Amount of Tax*		*% Increase in Tax Under Proposal*
	Present Law	*Treasury Proposal*	
$1,000	$4	$29	625%
1,500	24	109	354%
2,000	44	189	329%
2,500	64	270	321%
3,000	84	356	323%
4,000	123	550	347%
5,000	172	748	334%
10,000	686	1,958	185%
50,000	14,709	20,228	37%
100,000	44,268	53,332	20%
500,000	330,933	346,921	5%
1,000,000	718,404	731,906	1.8%
5,000,000	3,917,390	3,937,901	0.5%

For a married person without dependents (personal exemption $2,000) the figures are:

Net Income Before Personal Exemption	*Amount of Tax*		*% Increase in Tax Under Proposal*
	Present Law	*Treasury Proposal*	
$2,300	$3	$39	1,200%
2,500	11	72	554%
3,000	31	152	390%
4,000	70	312	345%
5,000	110	506	360%
10,000	528	1,628	208%
50,000	14,128	19,540	38%
100,000	43,476	52,474	20%
500,000	330,156	346,122	4.8%
1,000,000	717,584	738,086	2.8%
5,000,000	3,916,548	3,937,050	0.5%

So drastic are the proposed increases in the lower and middle brackets that even the *Wall Street Journal* described them as "a design to proletarianize the middle classes." Of course, it is not only the middle-income groups that are hit; a single person who earns $1,000 a year—some WPA workers are in this category—can hardly be considered a member of the middle class. As for the excise taxes (really sales taxes), they, of course, fall most heavily on the masses of the people.

In discussing new taxation in his budget message last January 8 President Roosevelt said: "The additional tax measures should be based on the principle of ability to pay." In a letter the other day to Chairman Doughton of the House Ways and Means Committee the President reiterated this view. But the fact is that the Treasury tax program completely violates the principle of ability to pay. It is evident that the administration is playing just as deceitful a game in regard to its tax program as it is on foreign policy.

In an effort to allay the protests at the exceptional harshness of the Treasury's proposed increases in the lower and middle brackets, the experts of the Ways and Means Committee have put forward a proposal of their own. The surtax would start at six percent instead of eleven percent. On incomes up to about the $38,000-$40,000 class the committee's surtaxes would be lower than under the Treasury plan; above that, the surtaxes would be slightly higher. Though this is an improvement over the Treasury proposal, the largest increases would still fall on the low- and middle-income groups. Lest any reader be tempted to conclude that under the congressional stuffed shirt beats a heart aglow with sympathy for the little fellow, let him take a look at the consumer taxes proposed by the Ways and Means Committee. Since the congressional income tax plan will raise about $1,100,000,000, as against $1,521,-

Stevenson

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000,000 under the Treasury plan, Colin B. Stam, chief consultant of the Joint Committee on Internal Revenue Taxation, an agency of the Ways and Means Committee, proposed that new consumption and excess profits taxes be enacted to make up the difference. These would be in addition to the excise taxes already proposed by the Treasury. Thus coffee would be taxed five cents a pound; sugar, one cent a pound; cocoa, five cents a pound; tea, ten cents a pound; electric light bulbs, one cent a bulb; automobiles, yachts, and airplanes, five dollars a year; insurance premiums, one percent; natural gas 3½ percent; and there would be various other increases. And the absolute fairness of Mr. Stam's proposals is illustrated by the fact that Tom Jones would have to pay the same tax on his jalopy, five dollars, as J. P. Morgan pays on his yacht.

When Mr. Morgenthau learned about the proposed consumption taxes, he bristled. To be certain that his bristling would not go unnoticed, he called a press conference. He denounced "taxing the poor man's table" and declared that such articles as coffee, tea, and sugar "would be the last things I would want to tax." Mr. Morgenthau's indignation is all the more remarkable in view of the fact that it was the Roosevelt administration which was the first in American history to have placed sales taxes on food, euphoniously named processing taxes. It is clear that the differences between the Treasury Department and the Ways and Means Committee are not over whether to soak the poor, but over the technique of soaking them.

The Treasury and congressional plans are proposed additions to a tax structure which is already heavily weighted against the common people. This is made clear in the monograph, *Taxation, Recovery, and Defense,* prepared for the Temporary National Economic Committee by its executive secretary, Dr. H. Dewey Anderson. Taxes are broadly classified in two groups: progressive, which are levied in relation to ability to pay, and regressive, which ignore the question of ability to pay. Dr. Anderson points out that progressive federal taxes increased only 30.7 percent from 1930 to 1938, while regressive taxes rose 145.4 percent. Progressive taxes contributed 72.2 percent of the federal government's revenue in 1930, but only 54.6 percent in 1939. Regressive taxes, on the other hand, rose from 14.2 percent in 1930 to 28.8 percent of all federal revenue in 1938. However, a proper picture of the tax situation requires the inclusion of state and local taxes. Discussing the total revenue collected by federal, state, and local governments in the fiscal year 1938, Dr. Anderson states:

> Progressive taxes, which are levied on taxpayers in proportion to their ability to pay them, and which by their very nature fall predominantly upon relatively well-to-do citizens, were only 26.4 percent of all revenue collected. Regressive taxes, comprising property, customs, sales, payroll, and other excise taxes, which take little or no account of ability to pay, and which usually restrict purchasing power, totaled 73.6 percent of all tax revenue.

Dr. Anderson further declares: "The brunt of the expanded federal tax program has been borne by the people, largely the consuming public, not in proportion to their individual abilities to pay taxes, but according to their inability to resist the imposition of added indirect taxes." He also warns that the existing federal tax system seriously interferes with business recovery "because it so sharply curtails mass purchasing power." But it is the avowed purpose of the new administration tax program further to curtail purchasing power. It seems, however, that the Roosevelt left hand and the Morgenthau right hand are not on speeaking terms. At his press conference on April 22 the President, according to the New York *Times,* "expressed the belief that the tax program would not necessarily injure consumer purchasing power." But the injuring of consumer purchasing power is precisely one of the things which Morgenthau, testifying before the Ways and Means Committee, declared to be a principal objective of the new tax plan. His exact words were: "It will help to mobilize our resources for defense by reducing the amount of money that the public can spend for comparatively less important things." Here is another Roosevelt promise gone out the window, for as recently as January 8, in his budget message, the President said: "I am opposed to a tax policy which restricts general consumption as long as unused capacity is available and as long as idle labor can be employed."

But much more than a Roosevelt promise has gone out. For the Morgenthau statement serves notice that a policy of contracting consumers goods production and reducing purchasing power will hereafter be pursued. The dream of certain New Deal economists that the war program will be the means of rejuvenating the senile economic system, increasing the production of butter as well as guns, thereby absorbing all the unemployed and raising the general standard of living—this glittering dream is now reduced to ash.

THE New York *Times* is quite right in describing this attack on purchasing power as "a reversal of former administration policy." But the argument which Morgenthau and other big business apologists give that this is necessary in order to check an inflationary rise in prices is true only if one places considerations of profit above considerations of the people's welfare. If instead of restricting the output of consumers' goods (the twenty percent cut in auto production is one example of this trend), production were expanded under the stimulus of increased purchasing power and at the same time profiteering were curbed, prices could be kept down, living standards could be pushed up, and many of the 9,000,000 still unemployed would find jobs. But that is a program of peace, of fuller life, and larger democracy for the common folk of America. It is obviously not the program of either the Roosevelt-Willkie interventionists or the Lindbergh-America First big business non-interventionists.

Philip Murray, president of the CIO, has proposed a different kind of tax program. Charging that under the Treasury Department's plan the federal government would be instituting "wage cuts in the guise of taxation," he presented to the House Ways and Means Committee a program that would place the burden where it belongs—on the wealthy. Instead of new income taxes on the poor, Murray proposed that the existing tax exemption be lifted for single persons from $800 to $1,000, and for married persons from $2,000 to $2,500. And instead of new taxes on articles of consumption, he urged the abolition of all excise and sales taxes on commodities that are not clearly luxury goods. At the same time Murray proposed that the new funds be raised through increased levies on high individual incomes, estates, and corporation profits, including taxes on excess and undivided profits and tax-exempt securities. This is a program genuinely based on the principle of ability to pay. And to those who say that the wealthy are already so heavily taxed that they can provide little additional revenue, Dr. Anderson's TNEC monograph gives the reply: "The higher income classes possess great income reserves above the needs and luxuries of life, or taxes imposed. In comparison with all other income groups in a democracy, committed to the concept of placing the tax burden on those able to pay it, these wealthy people are highly favored."

J. R. WILSON.

Rockefeller Missionary

MERLIN H. AYLESWORTH seems to be endowed with some of the miraculous powers of the legendary Merlin of King Arthur's days. He not only managed to survive exposure of his work as one of the power trust's chief bribers and polluters of public opinion, but he has just been rewarded by being named head of the radio section of the Communications Division of the Office for Co-ordination of Commercial and Cultural Relations Between American Republics. The coordinator of this government agency is a man with another unsavory name, Nelson A. Rockefeller.

Aylesworth's activities as general manager of the National Electric Light Association, organized by the Insull and other utilities interests, are written large in the records of the Federal Trade Commission. These records show that Aylesworth bought at wholesale and retail the favors of college professors and newspapers throughout the country. After leaving the National Electric Light Association in 1926 Aylesworth was selected by Owen D. Young to become head of Morgan's National Broadcasting Company. In 1937 he joined the Scripps-Howard management, and the following year became publisher of the New York *World-Telegram,* resigning Jan. 1, 1940. The appointment of this expert corruptionist to direct radio propaganda for Latin America tells a good deal about our government's aims below the Rio Grande and points east and west.

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DECISION

Stella was "such a jewel" and so awfully good with the children. Mrs. Feldon liked her fine, but . . . A short story by Wilma Shore.

USUALLY she came in through the kitchen to say hello to Stella and to see how dinner was coming along, but today she parked in the driveway and let herself in the front door. She went quietly up to her room and closed the door, and she stayed there until she heard Dave's car stop in front of the house.

The smell of dinner was in the air when she came down, and the kids were all combed and ready. Dave said hello kids, hello Janet, have a nice game? and ran upstairs to wash, and Laurie and Steven took hold of her with their clean loving hands and began to tell her about the game they had been playing with Stella in the kitchen. She wore her mother-smile but her eyes were on the stairs; she knew she would look away when Stella came in to say dinner was ready, and she wanted Dave to be there so that he could meet Stella's eyes.

During dinner she was careful not to look into Stella's face when she passed the food. Of course, she told herself, it's silly to get so worked up, nobody can tell me how to run my house after ten years; but just the same when she heard the back door close as she came downstairs from putting the children to bed it was as though she could breathe again.

"All right, now, what's the matter?" said Dave.

"The matter with what?" she said, because this was her own problem; he had enough to worry about.

"Don't start that stuff with me," he said. "I know when something's the matter. What is it?"

Then she realized that she did want to tell him very badly but she just didn't know which side to take; he was so definite in his feelings and so proud about the strangest things, and though she admired his pride she never knew beforehand how he was going to react.

"Oh, it's—it's something about the house," she said.

He folded his newspaper and put it firmly on his knee. "Well, what?"

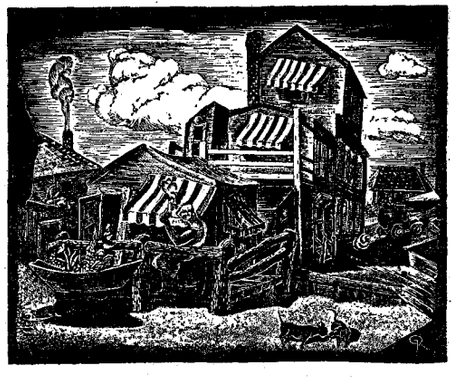
Of course if he was going to keep after her that way she might as well get it over with. She sat down on the couch. "Well, you know we played at Maude Dressler's today, so of course next Thursday the game should be here. So I said, I wonder if we couldn't make it Friday instead, I won't have Stella Thursday afternoon. But Janie Mitchell said no, she takes Peter to see you every Friday to get his brace tightened, and of course they all kidded me because I'm married to a dentist and I don't even know what's going on in his office. So then they said what's the matter with Stella, she's supposed to be such a jewel, and Janie said those colored maids are all the same, they simply have no consideration for you; so of course I said it wasn't Stella's fault, but this next Thursday she just had to stay home all day because she was expecting the relief investigator; they don't tell her when they're coming and if she isn't there they figure she's working, and she may get cut off relief."

She turned her head away, looking down at her hands, so he wouldn't see how upset she was. "Well, there was a silence as if—I don't know, they just sat there and looked at me, it was awful! And then Janie said, 'You mean she's on relief?' So I said of course, she was just coming to me a couple of times a week this winter, and it made me mad because they all know I only have a part-time girl and I thought they were rubbing it in."

He gave a little grunt and she looked at him but she couldn't make out what it meant. "So then Maude said, 'You should have come to the club last week, you would have heard Mr. what's-his-name, the man in charge of relief; he's asked us to report all cases of relief chiseling. You know these people have no right to get relief if they're working too.' So I told them Stella just had to work too because otherwise she wouldn't be able to manage, she has two kids and no husband and so on, and the money she gets from me just goes for clothes and extra food and things. But Maude kept saying, it's just as if she was stealing from us, after all we pay the taxes that support those people; as if I didn't pay any taxes and she paid it all, and I know her husband makes almost ten thousand but what's the difference, we pay our taxes just like anyone else—"

"Now listen," said Dave. "Stop getting hysterical because a bunch of women have a lot of ideas in their heads that God never meant them to be worrying about."

She came over and sat on the arm of his chair and began to play with the lobe of his ear. "But she just makes me sick with her two in help and her Packard sedan and she can't serve salad and cake like everyone else, she has to have more than anyone; today she had a great big pineapple all scooped out and filled with fruit, raspberries at this time of year, God knows what they cost—"



He removed her hand from his ear gently and put back his head so that he could look at her. "Well, what did you do?"

"Well, I—" She took a deep breath. "I told them never mind, I didn't want to go on talking about it, they should come Thursday as usual."

"But what are you going to do?"

Sometimes he acted just as though she were a child and he had to encourage her to stand on her own feet and make her own decisions. "You sound just like Janie, she kept saying, well what are you going to do? She kept saying, we don't want you to do all the work yourself. So I told her I didn't intend to, but I wanted them to come as usual and that was all there was to it."

He sat still for a minute and then he got up and began to walk up and down the room, unconsciously detouring around the coffee table. "They make me sick and tired," he said. "My God, that girl's been with us for three years! What are we supposed to do, report her?"

"Well," she said, sliding down into the chair, "it's against the law."

"The hell with the law," he said. "She can't get along on what they give her, with two kids. I'd like to see you try it."

He had that way of hinting that she was extravagant. "Well, I could too," she said, "if it's the law. After all, they don't just pick a figure out of the air. That must be what she needs to get along on."

He snorted. "I don't call that getting along. Why, do you know what those minimum diets can do to a child's teeth? I bet those kids don't have a good tooth between them."

She was sorry for the kids, of course. "But after all, I can't change the laws."

"Yes, I know you can't," he said. "But you can go on using her. She's a good cook and she's nice with the kids."

"Oh, now listen, Dave," she said. "It's very easy for you to say that. But I have to see those women day after day and our kids have to play with their kids. How do you suppose I feel? You should have seen how they looked at me! As if I were a criminal!"

"If you stopped worrying about what they thought all the time you'd be a lot better off," he said shortly.

It hurt her feelings. "You think I'm just a woman and I haven't got anything to worry about except little nothings, but I'm telling you it isn't nothing. What about you? Janie's going to go right home and tell George, and you know how he is about relief anyhow. And after all nearly every one of them comes to you for work on their teeth,

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and Janie with a four-hundred-dollar job for Peter. How about that? You can't just go ahead your own sweet way when you're making a living in a community. Or trying to," she finished.

She heard him stop pacing and when she looked up he was standing in the middle of the room staring down at the rug as if he were searching for a penny. "You see," she said.

He turned and walked over to the window. "And it'd be very nice if one of *them* goes and reports her. That'd look nice for you."

He patted the window pane gently with his fingertips. "I guess I'll have to take down the storm door next week," he said.

"You can see I have to do *something,*" she said.

"Yes," he said. "You have to do something." He turned back, looking around the room, but not at her. "Well, I think I'll go upstairs and have a hot bath."

She watched him mount the stairs and then from force of habit she went out and tried the back door. It was locked, of course. She opened the door of the cupboard; there was clean paper on the shelves. She had meant to tell Stella to change the shelf paper and she had forgotten it. She went upstairs and got into bed and began to read.

It was ten o'clock when Dave came out of the bathroom. She put down her magazine and watched him get into bed and open his book. "I called your mother today," she said. "She's feeling better."

He turned a page. "Yeah?"

He was frowning as he read. "All right," she said, "what do you think I ought to do?"

"About what?"

"About Stella."

"Oh." He smoothed down the page with his hand although it had been lying perfectly flat. "About Stella. Well look, Janet, I don't think you ought to go on worrying about this thing. If it's bothering you, maybe you ought to make a change. Don't let them browbeat you into reporting her; just let her find another job."

"Oh, Dave!" she said. "You know she won't find another job."

"No, I don't know it," he said. "I don't know it."

"Well I know it," she said. "There isn't a job in town."

He looked at her and his eyes were angry. "I don't understand you," he exclaimed. "One minute you want to let her go, the next minute you don't. You don't know your own mind."

"No, that's not so," she said. "I didn't want to let her go, I was only telling you what they said and the way they all looked at me. . . ."

He turned over on his elbow. "Do you want me to tell you what to do?"

She looked at him for a minute and then she said, "Yes."

"Let her go."

Their eyes held uneasily for a moment and then he looked back at his book. "All right, dear," she said, picking up her magazine. "Whatever you think best."

Gardner Rea

"Poor Morton had his wrist tattooed 'Union Now!'—and the brute who did it added an 's' to 'Union'!"

Stella came next on a Monday, and of course Janet was busy upstairs stripping the beds and getting the bundle ready for the laundryman. She had planned to tell Stella at lunch time but then she knew the kids would be coming home from school soon so she put it off. When she came into the kitchen Stella asked her about her arm, which had been bothering her; her first impulse was to give a short answer but she caught herself in time. "Oh, it's ever so much better," she said, with the sweet polite voice she used with people she didn't know, and she noticed Stella looking at her strangely.

At quarter to one she stood at the door waving good-bye to the children. Now, she thought. And then the phone rang; Maude was going to the movies, did she want to come along? "Oh, I'd love to," she said, and ran upstairs to get her things. But as she was about to close the door behind her she stopped and went back to the kitchen; she knew she would never enjoy the movie with that hanging over her.

Stella was working at the sink. She had tied a clean towel around her head, and her apron was freshly ironed; even her work shoes were neat, not run over at the heels. She was a tall girl, quite dark. Janet stood in the door for a second, wondering where to stand, what to do; she couldn't remember how she usually acted when she talked to Stella, whether she was doing something or just standing like a stranger in her own kitchen. She walked slowly over to the table. "Stella," she said, "I want to talk to you."

"Yes, Mrs. Feldon?" said Stella. She shut off the water and turned around.

Janet ran her hand over the porcelain table top; it had just been washed, and felt damp and cold. "Stella," she said, "you've been with me for three years now, and I've always been very well pleased—you know that, Stella?" she asked urgently. "You've been awfully good around the house, and with the children, they just love you, I know it," because it seemed to her the least she could do was to tell Stella something nice; she couldn't help keeping the hard part for the last, as though to spare them both as long as possible. But when she looked at Stella's face she saw that Stella had understood from the first word, and she hurried on. "You know Dr. Felton has been having a—a rather hard time of it, and I've always felt that people should live within their incomes, and now our income is cut so, people save on the dentist first of all, you know that—" She waited a moment for Stella's nod but it didn't come. "So we've decided that the best thing is to do without—without a maid, for the time being." It was done now and she finished quickly. "Of course when the time comes that we have a little extra money—you know I've always been pleased with you—"

If Stella had begun to cry it would have been more comfortable. But she didn't do anything. "Well—" said Janet, "I'm sorry, Stella—" And she put five dollars and twenty cents on the table and went out.

After the movie they had a soda, so Dave

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was home when she got back. He looked at her as she came in, and she nodded slightly, like a conspirator. Dinner was very quiet; she wasn't hungry. Probably on account of the soda. When they got up she looked at her watch; it was only seven o'clock.

She sat down to read to the children for a half hour, but her mind wasn't on the story, and Laurie kept saying, "Go *on*, Mommy!" She took them up to bed a little ahead of time but halfway up the stairs Laurie said, "I have to say good night to Stella—" and raced down again with Steven. Janet waited in their room; they came up a few minutes later. "Where's Stella going?" demanded Laurie.

"Oh," said Janet. "Well, Stella isn't coming back any more."

"Why?"

Janet took her by the shoulders and began to undo the little buttons on her dress. "Come on Stevie," she said. "Off with the shoes!" She turned Laurie sideways and bent her head so that her face was hidden. "Stella just has to go," she said.

"Well, is she coming back?"

"I don't know," said Janet.

Laurie began to wriggle. "I'm going down to ask her," she said. "Let go—"

"No," said Janet. "Laurie, it's bed time. Stop it, now! I'll ask her myself—later. . . ."

"What did she say?" said Dave.

Janet looked toward the kitchen. "Is she gone?"

"Not yet. She said she wanted to say goodbye to you. What did she say when you told her?"

"I'll tell you later," said Janet. "I mean—nothing. She didn't say anything."

Stella was sitting on the stool by the table, with her hat and coat on and her work shoes in a paper bag on the table. She stood up when Janet came in. Janet went across to her smiling and held out her hand; she had a sudden surge of real affection for Stella. When she felt Stella's hand in hers it was cool and rough, and she realized that she had never shaken it before. "Goodbye, Stella," she said.

"Mrs. Feldon," said Stella. "I just wanted to say, this is a big house, and with the kids and all—I wanted to say, I'd be glad to come and help you any time . . . you wouldn't have to give me anything."

"Oh, no—" said Janet. "No, no. It's all right. No, don't think of it. Please."

"It's all right, Mrs. Feldon," said Stella. "I'd be glad—"

"No, I wouldn't think of it," said Janet. "I have your address," she went on quickly. "If I wanted you I'd let you know; if I—" she wanted to say, if I have the money, but it stuck in her throat. "Goodbye, Stella," she said.

She finally got a girl for Thursday, but she was afraid to trust her with the food, so she let her clean the house while she fixed everything beforehand herself; she even measured out the coffee.

At around quarter to five, when she was dummy, she went out into the kitchen. The girl had changed into the green uniform she had bought for Stella to wear when there was company, and she sent her inside with a table cloth and began to shake the little radish-roses out of the icewater and arrange them around the jellied salad. The last one was in place and she was reaching for the olives when she heard the back door close and Stella came into the kitchen.

"I came to help you serve," she said, putting down her bag with the shoes. Her hand went up to unbutton her coat. "The investigator came this morning, so it's all right. I just remembered you had the ladies today, and I thought—"

Janet wanted to take her and push her out of the kitchen but instead she just stood there without moving and then behind her she heard the sigh of the swinging door and the footsteps of the other girl as she came in and then stopped. Stella's eyes jumped to the other girl. "—I thought I'd come and help you out—" she finished and her mouth stayed open.

Inside Janet's head it was as though something were boiling and in a minute it would boil over and then she would say something, but before that could happen Stella turned and walked out of the kitchen.

The other girl began to move uncertainly toward the table but Janet stood looking at the door. Then she ran across the room and down the back steps and around into the driveway. "Stella," she called. Stella stopped and looked back. "Stella," she said. "Let me give you your carfare."

Stella looked at her. "No, thanks, Mrs. Feldon," she said.

"Please," said Janet. "I—"

"No, thanks," said Stella. She gave the package a little shove. "It was worth a dime," she said, and she walked away.

Janet watched her turn onto the sidewalk and disappear behind the house and then she went back inside. She felt bewildered, she couldn't understand how all this could have happened. What made it all happen? She closed the door behind her and went over to the table. She took that dime from their food money, she thought.

It was warm in the kitchen. She stood rubbing her hands together and looking at the shining red salad, thinking she shouldn't have done it, and she remembered what Dave had said about the children's teeth. Why, that dime would have bought milk or oranges, she thought; she had no right to use it. Why, that dime belonged to the children. You couldn't deprive children of the things they needed. And then she would wonder why they weren't strong and healthy. No, she thought, it was altogether wrong. She had no right.

When she turned and went back through the swinging door she was beginning to feel very angry with Stella.

WILMA SHORE.

Jamison

"He keeps saying he's FDR."

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WHERE ARE THOSE JOBS?

The White House arms program was supposed to absorb all the unemployed. Adam Lapin discusses what the facts and figures actually show. Technology and job displacement.

Washington.

ABOUT six months ago the aircraft industry proclaimed that it was encountering great difficulty in getting skilled workers. That was the time when the National Association of Manufacturers, the Chamber of Commerce, and the whole big business lobby were lamenting the acute shortage of trained craftsmen for the booming arms industry. But at the same time the United Automobile Workers was up against the fact that thousands of its members in the Detroit area, highly skilled workers, were unemployed. So UAW officials made an offer to the aircraft industry via the Defense Commission. It was ready to supply die and tool workers and other categories of skilled labor from Detroit for aircraft plants in other parts of the country. There was only one major difficulty with this scheme from the point of view of the aircraft industry. Detroit die and tool workers are accustomed to relatively high wages, and are experienced in the ways of unionism. The proposal died stillborn in the Defense Commission and the aircraft industry has talked less about the shortage of skilled workers.

Propaganda about the need for more skilled labor has by no means ceased; it has simply subsided a bit in the face of rather stubborn facts. Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins and Federal Security Administrator Paul McNutt are still issuing optimistic and misleading statements which create the impression that the armaments program has all but wiped out unemployment. Sidney Hillman, assisted by a dozen government agencies, is still training millions of workers for jobs which may never materialize. Sober government economists are admitting that there is more than an adequate supply of labor, that the arms program has not solved the unemployment problem.

When President Roosevelt told a press conference recently that he was sending Knudsen and Hillman a letter asking for around-the-clock production on critical machines, he was asked whether there was a shortage of skilled labor to run these machines. He replied hastily that there seemed to be enough workers, and that the problem was one of marrying the workers to the machines. At the end of March the United States Employment Service had registered on its rolls as active job seekers about 5,166,391 workers. It is estimated that about twenty percent of these are skilled workers. WPA only a few days ago completed a survey of its depleted rolls and discovered 150,000 skilled mechanics and 154,000 additional workers with partial skills who could easily be trained for skilled jobs.

It will be recalled that a few weeks ago the TNEC published a striking study of technology and unemployment. The study showed that all of the traditional factors which were supposed to offset the effect of technological unemployment in a capitalist economy were no longer operating. Senator O'Mahoney, TNEC chairman, was constrained to make the following illuminating comment: "If the preparation for and the conduct of war constitute the only adequate compensatory force to the labor-displacing effects of technology, the proposition would then be established that only through war can the present economic system be operated in such a way as to approximate full employment." Senator O'Mahoney's pessimism was more than justified. As a matter of fact, in the present situation not even the most strenuous preparation for war has resulted in anything like full employment.

INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION is now above the 145 mark on the Federal Reserve Board's index of production, almost a third higher than production during the boom year 1929. But according to CIO economists who have carefully checked all available government sources, there are still 9,000,000 unemployed. It is true that Secretary of Labor Perkins announced that there were 2,366,000 more workers in non-agricultural jobs in March 1941 than in March 1940. But subtract the 600,000 new workers who entered the job market during the year, and there is a net reduction in unemployment of only about 1,800,000. Certainly Miss Perkins did not illuminate the situation particularly when she stated that there are now 1,541,000 more workers than in 1929, and left it at that. The fact is that there are 600,000 new workers looking for jobs each year, amounting to a respectable total at the end of eleven or twelve years. In addition, there has been an appreciable influx to the big industrial centers of farmers and agricultural workers displaced by tractors and mechanized equipment and the increasing trend toward larger-sized farms.

A Blashko

Reemployment as a result of the arms program has certainly not been spectacular to date, but there are now a number of indications that the rate of absorption will be slowed up considerably. Construction work on cantonments and other military projects of this nature will soon be completed, and then will decline abruptly. Miss Perkins revealed that in March there were already 26,000 fewer construction workers than in February. By December some 500,000 construction workers now employed on various military projects will have lost their jobs. Only a comparatively small number can expect to find employment on new projects.

Many industries, steel for example, are already working at capacity. There is little likelihood that they will now expand employment substantially. Priorities have already caused some unemployment in the aluminum industry. Extension of the priorities system will result in considerable unemployment among workers engaged in civilian production. The entire trend toward curtailing consumer purchasing power through taxes, "defense" bonds, and higher prices will create new groups of jobless workers. The auto industry's plan for cutting automobile production by twenty percent is expected to cause large-scale unemployment in the Detroit area.

As a result of these factors, CIO economists forecast that the expanding arms program will at most absorb 2,000,000 additional workers during the coming fiscal year from July 1941 to July 1942. This will leave an unemployed army of upwards of 7,000,000 despite arms expenditures which will reach an all-time high of more than $20,000,000,000. Vastly increased arms production, unaccompanied by increased purchasing power and a shorter work week, is obviously not enough to provide full employment in capitalist America—not even with a couple of million young men in the armed forces.

Underlying this phenomenon is the tremendous increase in the productivity of labor resulting from new technological advances. Federal Reserve and Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates show that in the twelve-month period from February 1940 to February 1941, production for all manufactures increased twenty-five percent while employment increased only twelve percent. The TNEC report on technology revealed that the productivity of labor advanced by 32.3 percent in all manufacturing industries between 1929 and 1939. Technological advances have caused displacements of workers. The TNEC estimated that despite the moderating effect of reduced hours, about 1,621,000 workers were

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displaced by technological improvements and increased labor productivity between 1929 and 1939. In the steel industry alone, new machinery displaced 88,000 workers or 17.5 percent of those employed in the industry in the two-year period between 1937 and 1939.

CONTINUED UNEMPLOYMENT at a level of about 9,000,000 makes the need for substantial WPA appropriations obvious. But even this is not the whole story. The inadequate absorption of the unemployed so far taken place has not been distributed equally. Arms contracts have been handed out to a few large companies; eighty companies received 85.5 percent of all major contracts with the result that only in a few scattered localities where plants of these corporations are located has there been any arms "boom." The TNEC estimated that thirty-two states got only 12.69 percent of the total of all arms contracts. According to WPA economists, seventy-five percent of all arms contracts have been distributed in areas where there are only twenty-three percent of the nation's WPA workers.

What it boils down to is that seventy-seven percent of the WPA workers are in areas which have hardly been affected at all by "defense" activities. WPA rolls slashed in the past are now scheduled for a series of new cuts, even though WPA officials have stated that waiting lists of workers meeting all qualifications for WPA work still hover close to the 1,000,000 mark.

Apparently WPA heads hoped to save their appropriations by tying in their activities as closely as possible with the arms program. Some 440,000 WPA workers are now busily engaged on "national defense projects," constructing airports, making roads for army camps, building barracks for the Army, improving harbors for air bases. WPA research projects have also been hastily adjusted to the new order. One group of research workers is compiling a series of tables intended to eliminate complicated mathematical computations and loss of time in firing coast artillery and long range guns. Another WPA research project has been devising a method of testing pilots by means of the sound waves of the heart beat and the electrical charges of the heart muscles.

Peacetime projects like the construction of playgrounds, gymnasiums, stadiums, incinerators, water treatment and generating plants, reservoirs and waterwells have to a considerable extent been abandoned. But instead of safeguarding the continued existence of WPA, the emphasis on military projects has simply reduced the number of WPA workers who can be employed by the program. Many of the so-called defense projects cost considerably more than ordinary civilian projects, and restrictions imposed on the total cost of construction, on the amount which can be expended for materials and on the amount which must be contributed by states and local communities have been lifted in these cases. The result is a sharply increased cost per worker on these projects, and less funds for maintaining the WPA rolls as a whole.

The all-time high for WPA enrollment was about 3,300,000 in November of 1938. The peak permitted by the inadequate $1,350,000,000 appropriation for the 1941 fiscal year was 1,900,000 in January. Enrollment is now down to about 1,500,000. It is scheduled to be cut further to a low of 1,300,000 in June. During 1940 WPA gave jobs only to some nineteen percent of the unemployed as compared to an average of twenty-five percent during the previous four years. President Roosevelt's budget estimate of $975,000,000 for the coming fiscal year may cut this percentage of the unemployed on WPA to an all-time low of fifteen to seventeen percent. The President's budget estimate is supposed to provide an average employment of 1,300,000. But the number will probably be reduced in mounting material costs and the expense of the new military projects.

Hearings on the WPA appropriation for the 1942 fiscal year are scheduled to start before the House Appropriations Committee on May 12. Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau's proposal for a cut of $1,000,000,000 in social expenditures has vastly encouraged the axe-men of the House bloc. They have already begun a campaign to slash WPA below the all-time low of $975,000,000 fixed by the President. On the other hand, CIO President Philip Murray has made a counter proposal which seems to meet the situation. Murray has urged the President to recommend a minimum appropriation of $2,500,000,000 to provide work for at least 3,000,000 jobs. The CIO proposal checks with the real facts of the unemployment situation.

ADAM LAPIN.

Rodney

"There you are, Mr. Hoover, all the Bridges witnesses you want."

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Strictly Personal

by RUTH McKENNEY

NO MARKET FOR ATROCITIES

THE newspaper called *PM*, mistaken for the first six weeks of its career as a progressive New York daily, came out last week with a frank, if somewhat naive demand for English atrocity pictures. Mr. Ingersoll, *PM's* editor, feels that the prints sent over from England have no zip. Gently chiding the English censor, Mr. Ingersoll argued that a couple of kids with their heads blown off or a bevy of blinded mothers might rouse the sluggish American public to do or die for the British empire.

Mr. Ingersoll's clamor for atrocity pictures brought him a loud horse laugh in the trade, at least. It is a well known fact that atrocity pictures can be produced by the baker's dozen in any news service dark-room. If Mr. Ingersoll wants something special in the way of hands cut off or Red Cross nurses nailed to barn doors, he can, of course, consult the 1917 files of any newspaper. Or if he prefers winter snowscapes, there are the Finnish pictures kicking around cheap, and hot stuff too, as any photo expert will tell you. Some of the best picture faking done in years came out during the Soviet-Finnish war, and a Russian corpse frozen to death while high-jumping could easily be doctored into an Anzac paralyzed to death by poison gas. Better yet, if Mr. Ingersoll wants the bona fide real thing he can take the very real pictures from the Barcelona morgue, complete with children, and have his retoucher cut in the background of the House of Parliament, and substitute a Queen Mary hat for the shawl draped over the head of the weeping mother identifying her shattered child. Incidentally, he need have no fear of the public catching him in a fraud, for the pitiful pictures of the Spanish dead appeared almost exclusively in the *Daily Worker*. In the days of the German-Italian invasion of Spain, President Roosevelt and his fellow humanitarians among the American publishers were much too busy helping the British strangle a democratic republic fighting for its life to have time for informing the American public what appeasement was doing to Spanish babies. So Mr. Ingersoll will find the terrible pictures of suffering Spain quite fresh and new. With a little fixing, they should serve his purpose admirably.

Unless, of course, Mr. Ingersoll, always a quixotic fellow, wants his English atrocity pictures one hundred percent truthful. In that case, it is my personal opinion that he'll have to wait a long time. For this war is slightly different from the last one, not in fundamental causes, of course, for it's still the same old fight for markets and world domination between two sets of imperialists. But this war is different because the little man at home is busy doing the dying. And it is the firm conviction (and should I question them?) of the big boys running this jolly old war that if the public, American, English, German, or what have you, ever got on to the true facts of life, there might not be any more second imperialist war at all.

Thus, to Mr. Ingersoll's printed dismay, the English censor passes only the pictures of the London bombings which show the jolly cockney with his thumbs elevated and a song on his lips. Mothers identifying headless children in morgues are taboo—for it takes a very deep conviction, and an absolute knowledge that freedom and only freedom is at stake to stomach the sight of a woman weeping over the mutilated body of her little girl. The English censor evidently feels that pictures of the London morgue may fill the reader with uneasy ideas about India and the Suez Canal. For I think it may be considered an axiom that no one but Winston Churchill and President Roosevelt and such like people consider the Suez Canal worth the life of even one baby or the agony in the heart of even one mother. For what shall it profit a Plymouth factory girl or a London worker to win back the whole world for the English gentry if the people they love lie broken and burned beyond recognition in the ruins of the tenements and hovels where they lived.

No, this is not the kind of war to favor atrocity pictures. Mr. Ingersoll is wrong. The American public, looking upon the real face of the English people, twisted in terrible agony, paralyzed by fear, frozen by sorrow and pain, could only ask, "Is it worth it? Is it worth so much that the people, the plain people should suffer so? Who cares for the Suez Canal except the ship owners and traders, and to a woman with both her legs crushed under a beam, what are the ship owners of England?"

Mr. Ingersoll is wrong. Even in Germany the only pictures of the war show the *Panzer* divisions getting kissed by Bulgarian or Greek or Norwegian or French young ladies. The German people will never see the pictures of the German corpses piled river deep in some lonely valley of the Balkans. They will never hear the dying screams of the little soldier boy with a bullet through his guts, for German newsreel men do not record such interesting passages on their sound tracks. The mother at home is only told that her boy died for the greater glory of his country; she will never know that he was trapped in a flaming tank and slowly roasted to death. Even in a military dictatorship it is never safe to let the people know the cost of what Hitler tells them is glory. If the mother knew her son took all of an hour's agony that transcends description finally to win the merciful surcease of death, then the question would beat on her heart: "Was it worth it? Is the Suez Canal worth it?" And someday she would answer, "No. For what does it profit me if the ship owners have the Suez Canal when all my life I will live with the screams of my nineteen-year-old boy burning to death during that endless hour?"

No, this is not the kind of a war to support atrocity pictures—on either side. Mr. Ingersoll is wrong to criticize the English censors. They know their business. Better to concentrate on power politics, better to encourage the American public to move pins around on newspaper maps, better to let them overlook the casualties.

For if the American public could translate the headlines into facts, if they could see the struggle for the Suez Canal not like a glorified football game, but in its real colors, if they could forget about military strategy and supply bases, and such like whooplas of the present war—if all those fancy trappings faded into the stark reality, then I know President Roosevelt could never dare to play with the fire of war.

For the headlines say: PLYMOUTH BOMBED. But the facts are: Sally Lumkin, aged eighteen and pretty, with her face all smashed in and her eyes blinded. The columnists write learnedly of the struggle for the Canal. But the real story of this ditch is written in the color of blood, the agony of Australians with splintered arms and legs dying in a lonely desert, the terror of a German youngster, feeling the bayonet knife cut out his life. Supply bases—and boys trapped in submarine shaken by a depth bomb, boys never to see sunlight again but to meet death with lungs bursting and eyes popping in agony. Military strategy! Every time a careless American moves a pin on a *PM* map, a thousand, ten thousand men have died, in pain passing description.

This is war, the true face of war. This is imperialist war, and men and women and children are dying, slaughtered by bombs and starved for lack of a bit of bread. This is what capitalism has brought upon the people of Europe and England and Egypt, even upon the people of Australia and India and South Africa. Yes, Mr. Ingersoll, the British censors are right. The imperialists cannot afford to tell the truth, and *PM* can scarcely afford to send out a call for bombing pictures.

For only the Communists, who fight every day of their lives for a world without war, for the brotherhood of man, only they can afford to tell the terrible true-story of the second imperialist war. The truth of this war is a weapon, but it belongs alone to the people.

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WASHINGTON HELPS THE BERLIN-HELSINKI AXIS

The occupation of Finland by German troops and arms. Some interesting if embarrassing questions for Messrs. Hull and Morgenthau to answer. Smoke and fire.

FINLAND is a long ways off from the Balkans geographically, and the times when that country dominated the headlines are now ancient history. Yet time and space are readily traversed in the Einsteinian physics of modern diplomacy. Our statesmen have assured us a number of times they intend no compromise with fascism, and Mr. Roosevelt has directed the freezing of funds belonging to countries occupied by German armies; simultaneously, we have been led to believe that Mr. Welles, the Under-Secretary of State, has been negotiating improved relations with a certain great power known as the Soviet Union. On both of these scores, it is worth asking some questions about Finland.

On September 26 of last year, the world was astounded by an official dispatch from Helsinki stating that "transit of German troops on leave and of German supplies is taking place between northern Norway and northern Finland subject to certain conditions and control measures." The dispatch went on to explain that "the arrangement was modeled after that between Sweden and Germany which became effective in July. . . ."

That the actions of the Swedish and Finish governments were not analogous was apparent to the most naive political observer. In May (not in July as the Finnish dispatch stated) at the height of the Narvik campaign, under pressure of a Nazi ultimatum the Swedish government reluctantly consented to permit the movement of German supplies and German wounded to and from northern Norway. The Norwegian roads were inaccessible at that time of the year and the coastal route was under the guns of the British navy, then in Norwegian territorial waters. In case of a refusal it was universally admitted that Sweden faced the risk of Nazi occupation. Finland's case was radically different from Sweden's. Having wrung transit facilities from Sweden the Nazis had no need of Finnish communications. Besides the Norwegian campaign was over. Britain could not spare any ships for the blockade of the coastal Narvik route which Germany preferred. But the most pertinent fact of all was that there were no intimations of a German ultimatum. Germany could not then have afforded to antagonize the Soviet Union or throw Finland into Soviet arms by hostile pressure. The first and only intimation of the passage of German troops through Finland came from the Finnish government and there were ample grounds for suspecting that it took the initiative in the negotiations which led to the "passage" of these troops.

Another dispatch from Helsinki stated that "German troops landed at Vasa, Finnish port on the Gulf of Bothnia. The number of German troops landed was not known, but whatever the number it was reported they would be followed by others later." Strangely enough the German soldiers supposedly on leave from northern Norway were landing in Finnish ports and proceeding inland instead of embarking from them on the way home to Germany. Since then there have been continual reports from Scandinavia which indicated the Reichswehr had made quite a habit of "passing" through Finland. It seemed also that the Nazis made a habit of stopping on the way in such strategic places as Vasa, Rovaniemi, Ivalo, Tornea, and other places of recent fame where they were stationed in permanent barracks. These reports were lent more than a semblance of truth by an official statement of the Finnish government (New York *Times,* Sept. 29, 1940): "After the first seven shiploads of uniformed German soldiers debarked at Vasa to proceed north into Norway in virtue of the Finnish-German transit agreement, the Finnish government issued a decree proclaiming Abo, Vasa, Kemi, Uleaborg, and Tornea as prohibited areas, access to which henceforth will be possible only with special police permits." The dispatch points out that "the coastline from Abo to Tornea completely covers the Finnish side of the Gulf of Bothnia," and adds disingenuously that "Abo is forty miles from Hangoe, *now an important Russian naval base.*"

It has remained for Ludwig Lore and the New York *Post,* both certainly no friends of the Soviet Union and no enemies of Finnish "democracy," to call public attention to the present plight of little Finland. Said Ludwig Lore in his *Post* column recently.

> . . . it takes more than arms and physical endurance to resist the new aggressor who is slowly but persistently robbing the Finnish people of their hardwon freedom. It began when the Finnish government, yielding to Nazi threats, permitted German troops to pass through its land to Norway. Today, sailors returning from the ice free port of Petsamo report that the great Arctic highway which leads to that city from Rovaniemi, the northernmost railway station in Finland, is always crowded with German troops. German troops are stationed in Ivalo, the largest city in that district, and in the great winter sport hotel in Rovaniemi German officers are living a carefree life as they wait for developments on the northern front. The Finns themselves who live in that area are suffering real want. It is almost impossible to buy food anywhere. In Petsamo ships leaving for the United States are examined by German army inspectors. Passenger lists must be submitted to Nazi officials for approval. All over northern Finland the roads have German signposts.

Why the Finnish government, which was willing to sacrifice the lives of tens of thousands of Finnish workers and peasants to

WHAT THE TROOPS MEAN

OUR article by Walter Broad had been in type for some time when the American press featured the *Pravda* dispatch reporting the arrival of some 12,000 fully armed German troops in Finnish ports. As our author indicates, these troop movements have been going on for some time and actually constitute an occupation of Finland.

The American press discusses these events in terms of Soviet-German relations. Some columnists speculate that the USSR is being outflanked in the north; some editors hold their breaths in the hope that Finland might become a scene of Soviet-German conflict. NEW MASSES has been pointing out to its readers the very real potentialities of worsening relations between the USSR and Germany in the Near East; but we would advise strongly against accepting the very simple interpretation of an imminent Soviet-German clash. Ribbentrop may again be circulating tales that Hitler would tackle the USSR in return for a truce with Churchill.

The chief immediate explanation for the Nazi troop arrivals seems to lie in the Finnish internal situation, as well as the relations between Finland and Sweden. In the past year, Finland has experienced a very acute political crisis—arising out of the problems of the disastrous adventure against the USSR. Last summer, the Society for Friendship with the Soviet Union made great gains in influence and membership. Even severe governmental repression was not able to stymie the growth in circulation of the left-wing press. Economic conditions are bad; there is no work for the loggers and paper mill workers; the farmers are suffering acutely while the news of reconstruction in the Kerelo-Finnish Soviet Republic and the Baltic Soviet republics naturally makes a powerful impression. Moreover, the 280,000 people who were forcibly evacuated from their homes in the Karelian regions have been left stranded. The big landowners resist any thought of yielding their land. The aristocracy in Finland is Swedish, and has traditionally held the Karelians in contempt. Feeling itself insecure at home, the governing coalition has therefore steadily veered toward rapprochement with Germany; in part, that explains the arrival of Nazi troops. According to the Swedish Communist paper, *Ny Dag,* an effort is also being made to involve Sweden in a military alliance with Finland—under Hitler's auspices—the sort of alliance which the USSR strongly criticized when it was first proposed last spring. The most reactionary Swedish circles look favorably on the idea. But the main groups are wary, especially since in Sweden also, the working class, despite the Social-Democratic leadership, is stepping forth to demand friendly relations with the USSR.

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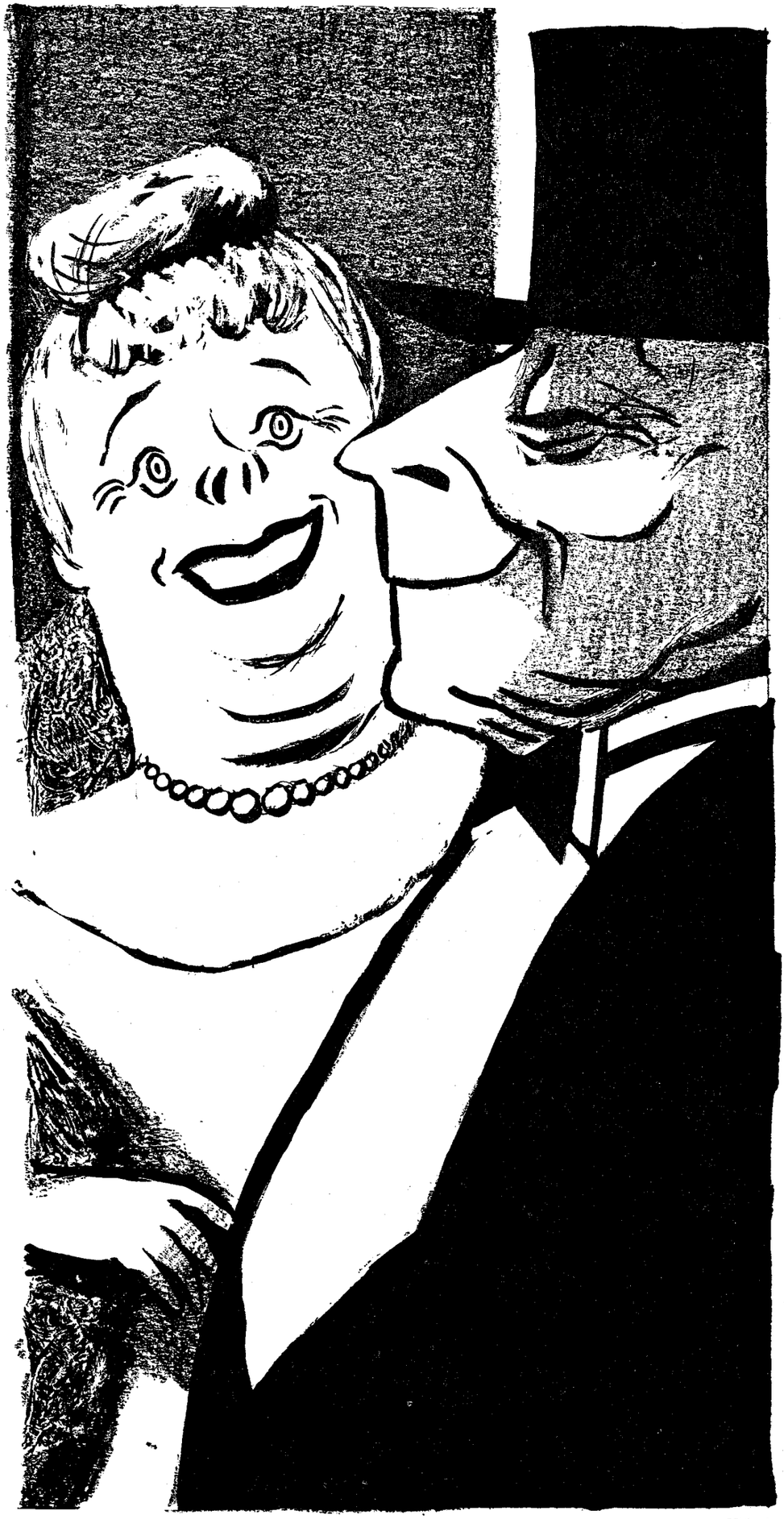
resist Soviet requests for minor rectifications of the Soviet-Finnish frontiers, is so easily resigned to the occupation of its entire country by the Nazis, Mr. Lore does not satisfactorily explain. However, Lore is not under any official obligation to explain that fact. But the occupation of Finland by the German army poses a ticklish problem for Secretary Hull which the latter may have overlooked in his anxiety to cultivate good relations with the Soviet Union. Since the outbreak of the war, the whole world (including the Soviet Union) knows that it has become the established practice of Washington to freeze the American funds of all governments that under military or diplomatic duress permit themselves to be occupied by the Nazis. This was done in the case of Belgium, Denmark, France, Rumania, and more recently in the case of Bulgaria and Hungary. When the Cvetkovitch government of Yugoslavia signed a treaty providing merely for the passage of German supplies and *ruling out the passage of German troops,* the Treasury Department regarded this treaty as sufficient grounds for freezing Yugoslav funds in America, and it was only when the Cvetkovitch government was overthrown that the order was rescinded. In the light of its rigid adherence to this principle the policy of this government toward the "passage" of German troops through Finland takes on overtones that are far from subtle. Not only have Finnish funds in this country not been frozen, but on the contrary as recently as March 18 another five-million-dollar credit was added to the $30,000,000 previously advanced to Finland. The public facts are that either the Finnish government was forced by Germany to submit to the occupation of Finland by German troops, or it did so willingly. If it was forced to this action as Mr. Lore and the Finnish government insist, then it is in the same class with Belgium, Denmark, France, Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria. If it did so willingly, then it is far more culpable than these other governments. Or does Washington want it to be inferred from the exception that it is making in the case of Finland that it is inclined to be sympathetic when a government is a willing tool of the Nazis, and particularly in view of its erstwhile difficulties with the Soviet Union?

The State Department has presumably been attempting to improve relations with the Soviet Union. In March, on the occasion of the news of the Soviet-Turkish nonaggression pact Under-Secretary of State Welles went so far as to dignify the Soviet Union with the title of a "great power." This must have been very flattering to a little state two and a half times the size of the United States, with one and a half times its population. But perhaps it would have been even more effective if the State Department had explained why we so resolutely opposed Nazi occupation of Yugoslavia and Greece, but are willing to cooperate and finance Nazi occupation of Finland.

WALTER BROAD.



Michaels

"We're not going to Europe this season, but we're planning to send our help."

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TIME TO TAKE STOCK

Labor can point to proud accomplishments in the past few months. The strength of the people. What future struggles will demand. An editorial article.

WHEN the coal miners reentered the bituminous mines, the first phase of the "all-out" war against the labor movement came to an end. The attack had been thrown back, and more, the unions could point to impressive victories. No one, of course, dreams that the Battle for America is over. But for the moment there is a partial lull while labor consolidates its gains, and the enemy prepares for the next assault.

It is well, at this time, to take stock—because the strength of the people is determined by the organized power of the working class. In our developed capitalist economy, the unions of necessity are the mainstay not alone of the working class but also of the people as a whole—the small farmers and little business men, the professionals and intellectuals. When labor advances, the people—all of us who make up the majority—are reinforced in the main fight against further involvement in the ugly, predatory war.

The newspapers called the workers' recent struggles a "strike wave." They cried out in anguish against what they deemed a "plot to stall defense." But as usual they concealed the reasons for labor's resistance, though they knew full well that strikes do not take place unless they are provoked. Underlying every stoppage in industry was the same cause: the greed of management, whetted by enormous profits, hungry for more. They would push the workers ever harder, speed them up, lengthen hours; they would keep wages at the same levels though prices were climbing.

The owners harbored no illusions. Obviously, the working class must be robbed of organizations through which it could effectively resist. The hope was that the cry of "emergency" would persuade labor to capitulate. Or that the blackmail shriek of "Red" would frighten the unions into line. If not, there was terror and brutality to crush them, legislation to cripple them, and "public opinion" manufactured by the press to overwhelm them. The campaign was plotted well.

Labor proved too strong.

TO THE annual CIO convention last November came the ambassador of the profiteers, coached by the White House. Sacrifice is good, said the smilingly baleful Sidney Hillman; collaboration, capitulation must be labor's role. But Social Democracy's treachery failed to beguile; the unionists turned away from the emissary of defeatism. The great in industry and finance, and their shrewd ally in the White House, then realized that they could not rely on words alone. They brought Sidney Hillman back to Washington, lavishing new titles upon him, instructing him in his task of "softening up" the labor movement prior to the attack. As head of the Advisory Defense Board, later as co-director in the Office of Production Management, Hillman strained to sell the unions to the corporations, to cheat those organizations which mistakenly came to him for protection, to line up the few who had no stomach for resistance and who saw personal advantage in becoming administration satellites. The executive councilmen of the American Federation of Labor, remembering the old fox Gompers, cringed and doffed their hats, eager to hire themselves out as flunkeys. More often than not, their unions refused to follow their command. Sidney Hillman's army of retreat proved to be no more than a squad of noisy sycophants promising pie in the sky as the workers' reward for eating dirt now. Temporarily, Hillman, the barker who could not fill the tent, was pushed into the background. That was the enemy's first rebuff.

With the turn of the year, came the full force of the offensive. At Lackawanna, the Bethlehem Steel Corp. felt out the working class. And labor's strong resistance won concessions for the unionists. At the International Harvester plants in Chicago and in the surrounding cities, management trotted out the Chicago Plan, whereby high AFL spokesmen expected to split the strike "in the name of labor." Police violence, a Federation-sponsored "back to work movement" did not bring the desired confusion and union collapse. True, in the end, the workers did not gain a complete triumph, but they could still point to partial gains instead of retreat.

In the crowded weeks thereafter, workers learned profoundly. They learned, during the strike of New York transport workers, that the tricky ruse of forcing arbitration on terms determined in advance by management could be defeated. Because the transport workers pressed their strike until the corporations granted arbitration on proper terms—on the premise of higher wages, not of cuts in pay—labor all over the country perceived the full danger of compulsory arbitration and how to balk it. Then, as the Allis-Chalmers strike in Milwaukee lengthened into weeks, the administration for its part tried a new approach—ordering the men back into the plants while the dispute was "mediated." The strike would end before management had agreed to meet demands, workers would enter mediation defeated before the negotiating began. By repudiating the OPM order, the Allis-Chalmers workers took the most significant step of the period: they defied the presidential appointees of the Defense Mediation Board to decree the ending of a strike. Had the workers abided by the edict, the employers could thenceforward have clamored that any strike precipitated a "defense emergency," and thereupon the national government could step in to terminate the walkout. With such a precedent, it was only a matter of choosing the time before strikes would have been forbidden altogether. The unions, unable to strike, would have been condemned to inaction and disintegration.

At Bethlehem, the police organized scabs to smash through picket lines, protecting them with an armed phalanx, beating and gassing and shooting into the ranks of the strikers. For a brief and ominous interval, the workers' lines wavered and broke, but they quickly reformed and against staggering odds, the steel union won an agreement even from the great Bethlehem Co. Back in 1937, Bethlehem with the other Little Steel corporations, turned back the steel workers' organizational drive. In 1941, Bethlehem was forced to raise wages, to bargain collectively—in writing, at Johnstown, which effectively negated the company's resolve never to put an agreement on paper. Victory at Bethlehem preluded a ten-cent wage rise granted by the United States Steel Corp. Other steel companies fell in line.

Then the great fortress of the open shop, the Ford Motor Co., whose vast domain was supposedly safe from unionism, fell before the workers. At Dearborn, in April, a great myth passed into oblivion—the myth that any corporation in all America is immune from organization, that any citadel is proof against the unified drive of labor intent on spreading the protection that organization brings.

The mighty gave way. Their cry of "defense" was answered with the question, "Defense for Whom?" The Red scare in no important labor action intimidated the rank and file. New York transport workers shrugged off the label. The Allis-Chalmers strikers, accused of questioning the authority of government, stood firm. Despite renewed government persecution of Harry Bridges as a "subversive influence," the convention of longshoremen and warehousemen reelected him as their president; even the few reactionary leaders in command of isolated locals here and there were constrained to go along with the majority to uphold the great militant leader of the Pacific Coast. Teachers in New York with indominatable courage defied the name callers. Professionals took the same course as their fellows in basic industry.

The President cajoled. Administrative bodies dragged out forgotten statutes, proclaimed new repressions, instituted still more investigations, and the workers scorned them. The owners attempted to set Negro against white at the Ford plant. But the unions forged solidarity between white and black; provocation designed to foment race rioting brought firmer unity. In every strike, the conflict itself advanced the cause of the Negro because only

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then could the white worker be strong. In steel, women—another oppressed section of the working class—won equal wages with men for equal work. The foreign-born stood side by side with their native-born brothers. Unity knows not discrimination.

The fight was the thing. The refusal to appease and to propitiate the enemy, the realization that retreat meant annihilation—these were the lessons of the struggles. The liberals talked of "labor's rights" as though these rights were fixed never to be gainsaid. But militant labor knew that rights were not to be had for the asking, that all was lost if the working class succumbed to the collaborationist policies of Sidney Hillman and the *New Republic,* or the "sane" conciliatory program of war urged by Roosevelt and the *Nation,* William Green and the host of labor "sympathizers" who had, so they said, "the best interests of labor at heart." By thrusting collaboration from their vocabularies, workers bolstered wages and rectified abuses. Above all, they reinforced their unions in the crucial mass-production industries.

The high point came with the battle of the soft-coal miners. Here, the goal was for more than economic protection; here the conflict was heightened by deep political overtones. Not since the days of Reconstruction had American workers so powerfully defied the semi-feudal system of the South, the arbitrary geographical barrier that split the working class. It is tribute to the leadership of John L. Lewis that he voiced the aspirations of American workers by refusing in the name of the Northern miners to consider resumption of work even under favorable conditions until Negroes and whites in the South won the same benefits. Miners scorned threats of compulsory mediation, the hysterics of the press. Solidarity again brought victory; the miners dug coal only when the operators were willing to negotiate for retroactive agreements.

Reaction turns now to the legislature, to framing criminal syndicalism acts, and measures sanctioning concentration camps for the foreign-born, forbidding strikes, compelling arbitration, enforcing "cooling off" periods. The administration has "cleansed" the National Labor Relations Board, weeding out personnel sympathetic to the working man. The President snarls, and Congress prepares to tax the people into privation. Patrioteers whip up the vigilante bands, underwriting assaults on Negroes, Jews, Catholics, the foreign-born, the Communist Party. For despite their unanswerable strength, the people have not yet fully mobilized to meet the onslaught. The unions do not yet perceive all the implications of war, the deep reality of convoys and expeditionary armies, nor yet the truth that the redder flows the blood on the imperial battlefields of land and sea, the blacker flows the ink on the corporation profit ledgers.

These days all struggles of the people are skirmishes within the greater battle against the war. It is this that John L. Lewis implied when he expressed the American majority's hate of the war. Yet to this time, the unions have generally limited their resistance to the economic front. Recent experience has proved that even in the shadow of war, the enemy can be repulsed. Even in the shadow of war, the unions can restore the ways of peace. But labor dare not now procrastinate.

For labor is in grave danger—from war, and from its own betrayers. The followers of Hillman have not abandoned their intrigues to deliver labor to the overlords. In the automobile union, they rush to mediate the General Motors dispute before the union has asserted its strength. William Green and his like sign no-strike pledges to the huzzahs of the administration and the plaudits of the press. Even within the CIO, the craven few who look to Hillman approve contracts outlawing strikes—in textile, in the Bethlehem shipyards—or attempt, like Walter Reuther with his misleading production plans, to harness automobile workers to more intense speed-up. Social Demoracy, repudiated in the open, creeps back to sap the labor movement of its weapons of protection. A few leaders, confused by the crafty, straggle after the traitors to raise the Red scare, to hound the Communists, thinking that retreat in this case will somehow forestall further pressure against labor. But retreat is never more than retreat; any fissure in labor's armor is the point of weakness through which the mortal blow can penetrate. The Red hunt, conducted by Dies and Coudert, by Hillman and Jackson, or by those bewitched by loud-mouthed sloganeers, must be repudiated or all the workers' proud accomplishments will be reduced to naught.

Yes, there are weaknesses. They menace the unions. Yet workers have shown their power, have given proof that no obstacles are so great that they cannot be overcome. This lesson American militant progressives and Communists have repeated all during the decades since the war. In the twenties, they declared that workers must organize themselves into industrial unions. And the working class learned that this was sound advice. They said that Negro and white, men and women, foreign-born and native must stand as one unit. And the working class found this the strategy of victory. They said that the Roosevelt administration lusted for war, that soft words masked the true direction of its course. Now, workers see the warning fulfilled. They pointed to fascism's poison at home—and the people see it spread. The strength of the Communist Party in final analysis is the gauge of the workers' power; and working class power is the measure of the people's might. Earl Browder is in the penitentiary for the crime of fighting for peace. The working class is weaker for that, and for every other militant immobilized by the ruling caste.

For some months now labor has proved its invincibility when united and mobilized against attack. The CIO has grown by almost a million members. The fight intensifies, involving the majority of the American people who see themselves menaced by war. Labor's past achievements give promise that with the working class in the lead, no obstacle can halt the people in their search for security and peace.

Defiance

I have lived long enough to see
Betrayal, and the traitors shot.
I have seen murder and the killers hanged.
I have seen rulers scurrying away
Like vermin from the coming light;
And nations, gripped in lockjaw terror, speak.
I have seen freedom too well prisoned
In the hearts of nameless men.
I have seen.
Despite the dungeon of my crippled shell,
Despite the walls that hem me in,
Despite deliberate darkness
Spread upon the land; I have seen awakening.
Therefore I have hope
Sure of fulfillment;
I have no need of death
Nor longing nor desire for it.
I seek no refuge there
Nor should you whose days
Lie endlessly and joyfully ahead.
Though death is offered cloaked in honor
Though death comes bugled, brilliant, blest
Reject it. Defeat it.
Tear off its uniforms and saintly garments;
Let it stand naked, ugly, shivering
Before all humanity,
Without honor anywhere.

ALEXANDER F. BERGMAN.

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NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

Editors
BARBARA GILES, A. B. MAGIL, RUTH McKENNEY, BRUCE MINTON, JOSEPH NORTH, JOSEPH STAROBIN, JOHN STUART

Business Manager
CARL BRISTEL

★

The Week Abroad

IT WAS a rather barren week for spectacular items. The Nazis have not yet attempted an invasion of Crete, the Mediterranean island which the British took over in the first stages of the Greek-Italian war; it would throw interesting light on problems of invading Britain if Crete were assaulted. In Libya, the British were giving stout resistance at Tobruk, an indication that the fight for Suez will be hard fought all the way. But the main developments seem to be proceeding on the diplomatic front under the cover of all sorts of speeches everywhere, from Staunton, Va., where Roosevelt gained new inspiration at the Wilsonian shrine to the Kroll Opera House in Berlin where Hitler reported on the Balkan campaign. It was a typical Hitlerian speech: appeals to the Almighty, professions of peace, furious invective at Churchill, flattery for Turkey, boastfulness of the power of Nazi arms. Underneath it all, however, lay the recognition in Germany that the war may go on much beyond the present year.

Two items from Britain are noteworthy: one, that the population of Plymouth was being evacuated as a result of the air-raids. So far as we know this is the first case of a large scale evacuation of a fair-sized British town. The government seems to have ordered the evacuation because the people themselves were beginning to stream out on the highways, anywhere at all to get away from the bombardments. And then there was the Cabinet shift—some obscure businessman called Leathers, a director of no less than 47 world-wide companies, was elevated to the House of Lords so that he could take the Cabinet post for shipping—rather a good specimen of the "democrats" running this war. Lord Beaverbrook was given a new post, the ministry of state. It looks as though Ernest Bevin and his friends have not been doing as good a job as British imperialism demands. It may be one of the small signs of a whole trend toward the total fascization of the British state, on which there is much more to be said.

THE REALLY important development is Iraq. For most people, Iraq is forbiddingly far-away; its geography is as unfamiliar as its politics. But it is the wealthiest, most strategic region of the Middle East, as large as England in size, with as much as a billion dollars in British money sunk in its fabulous oil fields. The oil was grabbed from Turkey after the last war. It lies up in the north, and pipelines feed westwards to Syria, and to Haifa, from which the British Mediterranean fleet is fueled. Iraq lies in the ancient valley of the Tigris and Euphrates; the delta of the two rivers is the Basra base, from which the British control the entire Persian gulf region. Iraq's 3,500,000 people have often revolted against British rule, and finally achieved a pseudo-independence by a treaty with Britain in 1930. Sifting through the dispatches, it looks as though the British landed a force at Basra, anywhere from 20,000 to 60,000 men, Australians and Indians, for the purpose of gaining a commanding position in northwestern Iraq, a position which would outflank French Syria from the east, make contact with Turkey from the southeast, and dominate the approaches from the Soviet Trans-Caspian as well.

Native Iraq troops contested the landing at Basra, and also occupied air fields along the pipeline which runs to the Mediterranean. Some reports say that the pipeline has now been shut down by roving Arab bands. Large battles have taken place, with the British slowly gaining the upper hand. In brief, *this is the first full-scale military engagement in this war of a semi-colonial people against an imperialist power.* It must therefore be causing intense excitement in the whole Arab world—from Libya, through Syria (where things have been bubbling over for months), clear through to Persia and India, where large Moslem populations reside.

The British High Command have acted with an initiative and decision contrasting sharply with their hesitations in Greece. They exhibit all the characteristics of men who know how empires are ruled. Turkey's effort to mediate the issue has been arrogantly turned down in London; imperial Britain insists on her way in the colonial world. Of course, German and Italian propagandists are taking advantage of the moment, trying to manipulate various chieftains and Arab politicians in their own interest. But there is, as yet, no evidence of direct Nazi participation in the Iraq struggle, there is as yet no proof, although it is possible, that the military general who seized power in Iraq a month ago, Ras Ali Gellani, is a German agent. It is more likely that sections of the Iraqi leadership see the occasion to take advantage of Britain's dilemma to strike out on the path of full independence, with all the consequences that would have for the whole Arab world. Hitler could try to dicker with this kind of thing, but could he ever control it? We doubt it.

Step by Step

SINCE the American people continue stubbornly reluctant to undergo a second victimization in the name of democracy, the Roosevelt administration is compelled to resort to guile and circumvention to achieve its ends. On the heels of the announcement that the Navy will defend America by patrolling the seas thousands of miles away in behalf of the British empire, comes the news that young American military pilots will fly as observers with British squadrons. If this isn't the first token shipment of an AEF, it bears a remarkable resemblance to the genuine article. These pilots will do their "observing" not on practice flights, but in action against German planes and over German cities. They are going to be shot at, some will be killed, others wounded, and our hunch is they are going to do something more than passive observing. The British are evidently running short of pilots, and this is one way of providing them without running head-on into the opposition of the American people. At the same time the President who only a few months ago pledged non-participation in foreign wars, announces that "we are ever ready to fight again."

The very sordidness of the conflict as to who is to be master over the subject peoples of Europe, Africa, and the Middle East compels the imperialists to "idealize" and "spiritualize" the war. Never has President Roosevelt given the public such a heavy dose of "spirituality" as in his address at the dedication of Woodrow Wilson's birthplace. This reflects the exigencies of the time; it is necessary to draw a veil over the Wilsonian villainy of the past in order to conceal the Rooseveltian villainy of the present and future. The effort to depict the man who shamelessly betrayed his pledge to keep the country out of war, who sent hundreds of thousands of American boys to death and agony, who suppressed civil liberties under the Palmer reign of terror, who sent troops to crush democracy in Soviet Russia—to depict this man as one "whose whole active life was dedicated to the cause of freedom" only underscores the nature of the cause to which Wilson's successor has dedicated himself.

And Wendell Willkie adds his footnote to the history of imperialism when in the May 10 issue of *Collier's* he exhorts Americans to stop being afraid, and declares: "The capital of the world of tomorrow will be either Berlin or Washington." On that score there are no real differences between Willkie and ex-Colonel Lindbergh and the other luminaries of the America First Committee. What they disagree on is the strategy for making the United States master of the world. The American people have reason to fear the ambitions of the Hitlers, Churchills, Roosevelts, Willkies, Lindberghs, and the class for whom they speak. The fact that some of these call their dreams of world domination "democracy" and others, "National Socialism," merely proves that big business imperialism operates under more than one alias. Africa and the Middle East, where the war between empires collides with the struggles of the colonial peoples, make clear that this is in truth a war to determine, in the candid words of the *United States News,* who is "to have the privilege of pushing other people around."

Amending the Draft

IT ISN'T hard to do some instructive reading between the lines in the administration's proposals to exempt married men from the draft and make the age classification twenty-one to twenty-six—or possibly start with eighteen—instead of the present twenty-one

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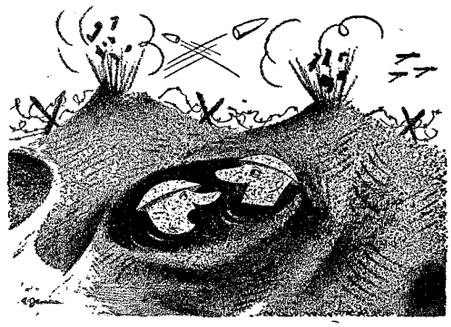
to thirty-five. Evidently the Selective Service hasn't found it so simple a matter to take men from their wives and dependents. It has been done, of course, as most people are very well aware, but the protest has been strong enough to reckon with. The draft directors have finally discovered that "possession of a wife" (to quote the commercial press reports) is a "liability" to a man earning twenty-one dollars a month. They have also found out that "mental readjustment" to army life is very difficult and men over twenty-six often cannot make it. Moreover, a decade and a year of economic crisis have left truly shocking physical effects, particularly on the men of thirty or more. So far, 42.5 percent of all draft registrants have been rejected for physical unfitness. The administration hopes, by concentrating on the very young, to muster enough vigorous specimens for the strenuous "shooting stage."

Meanwhile the older men will be drafted into the war economy at home in accordance with their skilled training and abilities. And, not at all incidentally, the concentration on low-age groups will raid college life and the whole youth movement, where anti-war protest has been most determined. Only now, after months of pressure on the administration, has it been decided to defer the drafting of medical students. Yet the fact that this deferment was granted in response to public demand—just as the exemption of married men is being considered—is a wholesome symptom of the people's opposition. It reminds us encouragingly of a very wholesome legislative proposal—Rep. Vito Marcantonio's bill to repeal the Burke-Wadsworth Conscription Act entirely.

Anti-Poll Tax Week

DO NOT forget: *10,000,000 American citizens* of voting age are not allowed to vote. Remember that especially during Anti-Poll Tax Week, May 11-17. This will be the week of demonstrations, parades, mass meetings, all directed to bringing the Geyer anti-poll-tax bill out of the House Judiciary Committee where it has been entombed for over a year. The committee's chairman is Hatton Sumners of Texas, one of the eight Southern states that disfranchise Negroes and poor whites through the poll tax. Mr. Sumners, Martin Dies, "Concentration Camp" Hobbs of Alabama, "No Strike" Vinson of Georgia, and other poison flowers of Southern reaction are "elected" by just twenty-one percent of the voters in their states.

So far thirty-two congressmen have signed a petition to force the Geyer bill out onto the floor of the House—218 signatures are required. The campaign of May 11-17 is particularly aimed at awakening people to the necessity of putting the heat on indifferent or reluctant congressmen. To this end the Southern Negro Youth Congress, American Youth Congress, and scores of other progressive organizations are making Anti-Poll Tax Week a dynamic seven days of popular pressure. More is involved here than even the right of ballot. For the 10,000,000 men and women who have been robbed of their voting power are those most oppressed by—and most resistant to—Jim Crow, economic exploitation, war, and all their attendant evils.



"I don't see why they didn't give the Pulitzer Prize for fiction to Jan Valtin."

Workers' Victory in Canada

FROM up in Winnipeg, Manitoba, the big city of western Canada, comes one of the most striking events of the week, significant for the entire hemisphere—the election to the Manitoba Legislature of Lieut. William Kardash, on an anti-war, anti-capitalist ticket. Kardash received 4,889 votes, running far ahead of the candidates of the Canadian Commonwealth Federation, the Social-Democratic outfit. The present mayor of Winnipeg by comparison, got little more than half of Kardash's vote, and landed eight places below the Workers Committee candidate. For a nation at war, where the Communist Party has been outlawed, where the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have summarily interned a dozen leading trade unionists, including a Communist alderman, and are still hunting for a Communist member of the legislature, James Litterick—the election of a progressive candidate on a people's program is a sign of the times. Kardash was a member of the Mackenzie-Papineau battalion in Spain, lost a leg in the Spanish struggle. His election to office in the face of an unparalleled Red scare, a concentrated barrage from all anti-working class forces, upholds the old revolutionary traditions of Winnipeg, scene of a great general strike after the last war. Greetings and congratulations.

Clearing the Air

THERE is no need as yet to get overexcited about the Federal Communications Commission's order that the National Broadcasting Co. drop one network from its chain, or about the further regulations limiting the contractual power of the two great radio networks. With the main argument of the Commission, that NBC and CBS are monopolies, not too concerned with the "public interest," there can be no dispute. Certainly, like the great chain newspapers, radio has become an instrument of the largest financial interests. And certainly, the networks have been guilty of barring from the air free discussion by minority, consumer, and labor groups, as well as all broadcasts not passed by censors responsible to large advertisers and the powers-that-be. On the West Coast, for example, the CIO was unable to buy radio time to present the case of Harry Bridges to the public. It is even impossible to dial in on popular songs now that the chains refuse to deal with ASCAP because they balk at paying a fair price to composers.

But the FCC order has yet to become reality. The chains promise to fight the Commission to the end—which means months and perhaps years of litigation before the public is given relief. The main purpose of the Commission's order will not even then be accomplished—the breaking of the broadcasting monopoly. The Big Stick can be shaken in the faces of NBC and CBS—but that will hardly do the trick. The Standard Oil trust once was told to dissolve. The company complied with the law—and the company remains a vast monopoly. Control of big business involves financial dominance: in the case of radio broadcasting, it is hard to see how the FCC can affect the financial backing of the big radio companies still held firmly in Wall Street. But even though the FCC's order will hardly have far-reaching results, the mere challenge of the great networks is a step in the right direction.

The Pulitzer Prizes

THE Pulitzer Prize Committee has been working its way down to Westbrook Pegler for some years now. It has reached bottom at last. That this unscrupulous enemy of labor and civil liberties should receive the award for distinguished reporting is a grim commentary on the state of commercial journalism. The same corruption of judgment is reflected in the award of the drama prize to Robert E. Sherwood for his war-mongering attack on the Soviet Union, *There Shall Be No Night*. The war bias of the Pulitzer committee, composed of men like William Allen White and Arthur Krock, is further revealed in its decision to create a special reward for the New York *Times*. The award to the *Times* for its foreign news coverage is in reality a tribute to the perseverance of that paper in whipping up hysterical support for the conscription act, the lend-lease act, convoys, and a new AEF.

The committee could find no novel deserving of its benediction, despite the fact that Richard Wright's *Native Son* was the obvious successor to last year's prize-winning novel, *The Grapes of Wrath*. Perhaps one should be grateful that even a Pulitzer committee did not have the courage to nominate Kenneth Roberts' *Oliver Wiswell*, a fitting companion for Sherwood's play and Pegler's poisoned columns. The prizes for biography and poetry this year are undistinguished. The editorial cartoon award was given to Jacob Burck of the Chicago *Times*. Mr. Burck was formerly associated with NEW MASSES and the *Daily Worker*.

By and large, the choices this year are an official endorsement of the cultural reaction accompanying the war. It is getting to the point where honest writers sigh with relief when the Pulitzer committee passes them up.

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Readers Forum

Bourgeois-Democratic?

To New Masses: Congratulations on A. B. Magil's series of articles on our historical heritage. He has made a real contribution to the Marxian interpretation of American history, especially in his discussion of the progressive *economic,* as well as *political,* role of Jeffersonian democracy, and in his characterization of the post-war people's movement as the continuation of the revolution in its bourgeois-democratic phase.

However, it seems to me that the author, in the introductory sections of his articles of February 18 and March 11 has made a number of statements which overemphasize the bourgeois character of the War of Independence and underestimate the independent role of the people's forces in that struggle. He states without qualification that the Revolutionary War was a bourgeois (not a bourgeois-democratic) revolution. He implies that the big merchants and planters themselves took the initiative for those progressive changes in the internal class relations made during the war.

Of course, the War of Independence was a bourgeois revolution in that it marked the transfer of state power from the monarchy which represented the merchants and aristocrats of England, to the colonial bourgeoisie. But it was also a vital stage in the development of the bourgeois-democratic revolution whose further progress is ably described in Magil's articles. As I understand the term, the bourgeois-democratic revolution is the struggle of the common people—farmers, artisans, proletarians, etc.—to carry the bourgeois revolution beyond the point where it simply results in the transfer of power to their bourgeois exploiters.

In this light, practically every colony was the scene of bourgeois-democratic struggles even before the Revolution. The small farmers and frontiersmen fought time and again against the united opposition of the big planters, land speculators, and merchants as well as the crown officials when they demanded representation of frontier counties in provincial assemblies, extension of the suffrage, access of settlers to the big land grants.

The Revolution itself gave a tremendous impetus to the hope of making America a land of equal opportunity and equal rights for the common man. The Declaration of Independence, written by Jefferson with the aid of Franklin, another great democrat, went far beyond the *bourgeois* program of independence from England. It expressed the aspirations of the people, of the *bourgeois-democratic* revolution. Down to the present day, its slogans have been the rallying cry of the workers and farmers in their struggles.

The class struggle was not entirely "held in leash by the necessities of a united war for independence." In every state, spokesmen of the petty-bourgeois masses challenged the big merchants' and planters' monopoly control of political life. In four states, popular parties were successful in wresting control from the more conservative section of the revolutionary united front.

In the struggle against Britain as well, the common people did more than follow the lead of the upper bourgeoisie. When the big merchants in Massachusetts and other colonies showed signs of capitulating to the British in the years before the Revolution, the farmers and mechanics, organized into the Sons of Liberty, rallied to prevent such a betrayal.

The progressive political and economic development of America made it possible for the common people to make their own voices heard from the beginning of the Revolution. In France, on the other hand, the urban petty-bourgeoisie and the peasantry became conscious of their power to win their demands only after the bourgeoisie had made the first breaches in the power of the monarchy. Therefore, I do not think we can characterize the first stage of the American Revolution as solely bourgeois, as we can in the case of France.

New York City. Gordon Place.

[I appreciate Mr. Place's letter and find myself in agreement with much of what he says. I was primarily concerned in my first article with the period that began after the War of Independence. Space limitations prevented me from touching at all on the pre-revolutionary period. But I would agree entirely that it was the little people that took the initiative in launching the struggle against England in the years prior to the Revolution; and it was their pressure that overcame all compromise tendencies among the anti-British merchant capitalists and planters. The Declaration of Independence was the expression of this democratic upsurge of the common people. But what determined the political character of this phase of the Revolution was not the participation of the masses —the masses take part in every genuine revolution —but the manner of their participation. The fact is that during the War of Independence it was not the farmers and mechanics, but the wealthy merchants and planters who took over most of the positions of power (Mr. Place himself says that in only four states were popular parties "successful in wresting control"); and it was the program of the upper classes that triumphed at the constitutional convention—a program that fell far short of the promise of the Declaration of Independence. The class struggle was "held in leash" in the sense that it was subordinated to the war carried out under the leadership of the bourgeoisie.

The distinction between the bourgeois and bourgeois-democratic revolutions should not be conceived in terms of fixed absolutes, but of major trends. The dominant trend in the first period was toward limiting the struggle to the class aims of the commercial bourgeoisie—a minority of the population. The dominant trend in the period that opened with Shays' Rebellion and the battle for the Bill of Rights was toward widening the struggle in order to further the interests of the petty-bourgeois masses, who constituted the majority. In the first phase the little people were the auxiliary of the bourgeoisie; in the second they were its opponents. It is this difference in the *main direction* of social development in these two periods that, I feel, justifies the characterization of the first as bourgeois and the second as bourgeois-democratic. —A. B. Magil.]

Baldwin and Bridges

[The April 8 issue of New Masses carried an open letter by Charles J. Katz of Los Angeles, to Roger Baldwin of the American Civil Liberties Union, criticizing the stand the ACLU took in the case of Harry Bridges. Below we print a reply by Mr. Baldwin to Mr. Katz and the latter's response.—The Editors.]

Dear Mr. Katz: I note in the New Masses of April 8 in the Readers' Forum the publication of the letter which you addressed to me under date of March 21 and to which I replied on March 25.

I told you in my reply that there was no basis whatever for the statement that the Bridges deportation proceeding involves no issue of civil liberties. It is so obvious to everybody that it does I wonder that such a question could be raised. I told you that our San Francisco office had offered its assistance in the present case to Bridges' attorneys. I also told you that since the case comes within the jurisdiction of that office, any public statement about it would come from there. I further told you that if Bridges is ordered deported on a finding that he is or was a member of the Communist Party, we would of course assist on the appeal.

In the light of that I am at a loss to understand the publication of your letter to me. You add to your letter the categorical statement that I have been notifying certain people in New York City not to participate in the defense of Harry Bridges. That statement is wholly untrue. Such a charge should not be made without substantiation. In view of its publication I must ask you to give me the source of your information.

It is certainly a disservice to the defense of Bridges for an attorney connected with it to attempt to divide forces by public charges based on no evidence whatever.

New York City. Roger Baldwin.

Dear Mr. Baldwin: The source of my information concerning the position of the ACLU is a person of unimpeachable integrity.

Indeed, the damaging character of the official statement first adopted by your executive board on April 1, 1941, would appear, of itself, to be proof of that reliability.

I am of course very happy that the Union has now reversed (or revised, if you wish) its first stand. Whether my letter had any part in this result is confessedly unimportant.

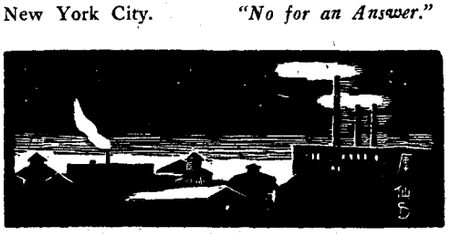
I wholeheartedly agree with you that the ranks of genuine progressives should not be thinned in these times by intra-mural struggles. You may be sure that neither I, nor the other good friends of Harry Bridges, will ever inspire any such unnecessary strife.

Los Angeles, Calif. Charles J. Katz.

"No for an Answer"

To New Masses: May I correct an error of omission in Lou Cooper's otherwise excellent review of Marc Blitzstein's record album which appeared in your April 29 issue. The first paragraph deplores the fact that no commercial producer undertook to give *No for an Answer* a wider audience, but Mr. Cooper's review does not mention the fact that the opera will be produced the early part of October. It will be put on the boards despite the indifference of Broadway impresarios because the public responded to our appeal for investing in *No for an Answer.* We still have to realize several thousand dollars more to complete our budget. We are depending upon our friends to cooperate.

Edna Ocko,
Campaign Director for
New York City. *"No for an Answer."*



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PORTRAIT OF A CLAN

Harvey O'Connor's record of the acquisitive Astors opens a new era in biography. The origin of a family and its private property. Reviewed by William Blake.

THE ASTORS, *by Harvey O'Connor. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.75.*

HARVEY O'CONNOR in *The Astors* has laid us under a three-fold obligation. He has taken the dry bones of acquisition, avarice, and gentility and endowed them with flesh and blood; he has given us twenty or so complete biographies and some thirty large minor biographies in terms of the special sources of the revenues of his heroes (though cunning in picturing the varied hues gold creates against the spectra of personalities); and lastly, he has shown us that magisterial learning can be fortified by wit and made light by selection, by just emphasis, and by unfailing use of color. It is not too much to say that it opens an era in American biography and that it has antiquated the chatty, the nostalgic, the muckraker, the cream puff, and the neurological schools of biography that have come out of the decline of capitalism.

For a generation American historiography and biography have lagged so far behind the best European work that one has wondered whether the Atlantic was 3,000 leagues wide rather than 3,000 miles. Yet, as far as biography is concerned, O'Connor has at one bound surpassed any European contribution of which I have knowledge.

Nor is the reason accidental. John Jacob Astor's fortune is here intimately related to the supremacy of frontier and shipping income in the pre-protectionist America just coming out of the swaddling clothes of mercantilism to which Britain had condemned the colonies before 1776. His perception of real estate values is tied in with the ceaseless growth of population, both by the high birth rate maintained by Western free land and the greatest tide of voluntary emigration ever witnessed. In the second generation of the Astors the extinguishment of genius does not nullify the family gains: rather it indicates that real estate revenue is a parasitic feature of nascent capitalism. The Astors battened partly on capitalists who had battened on workers and so, apart from slum rents, they were two removes from the process of production. Hence they early exhibit the tendency to the "aristocratic" tastes of the leisure class, following almost monotonously the patterns set up by Veblen in his book. They seek to get around the democratic abolition of primogeniture, entail, and feudal tenures by the use of testamentary provisions and trust funds and black-letter lawyers. They marry into patroon families on the Hudson, and mingle their dull blood with the livelier Knickerbockers and old Huguenots. They

Harvey O'Connor

completely lack a civic sense. At last, rounded out as lords of the social order, they begin to produce variants. They shudder at the vulgarity of their founder: they slowly emerge from owners of slums into sellers of luxury apartments and megalopolitan hotels, they find the democratic aspects of industrial capitalism repugnant, until at last one branch of the family repudiates America and enters the British aristocracy (by purchase).

Collateral branches of the family such as the Chanlers give Borgia flavors to the book; others such as the Delanos and Roosevelts convert static sources of revenue into demagogic politics, exactly like the "Young England" that followed Disraeli.

The Astors (though tenacious of property and singularly ungenerous) are plagued by a want of originality, and this absence of originality, in its turn, veers into the eccentric in literature, politics, and the theatricalism of daily life, the better to conceal the mortification of economic initiative. While the Carnegies, Rockefellers, Bakers, Morgans amass the hundreds of millions, the Astor fortune relative to the growth of population and wealth is progressively less important. The weight of taxation (so much more easily circumvented by those in the seats of industrial power) begins to affect their princely revenues, and, at last the British Astors, who fled to England as the citadel of class relations, find that their New York properties may be sequestrated for the defense of the class interests of their adopted land. The O'Connor book is so rich in these economic implications that it would be folly to list all of its permutations.

But the best of the book is not in this remarkable understanding. Rather it is in the detailed portraiture, in the superb sketches of New York, its politics and commerce, its population and their dwellings, in the manifold vagaries of its governing class, in the thick overlay of culture (whether as taste, badinage, pretense, or substance) in the packed allusions, in the graceful and witty words and in a continuing flow of interest. We can only salute a masterpiece.

Since this is bound to be a standard work, and, unless readers are blind to merit, it must go through many editions, perhaps some suggestions are in order. One is that the early career of John Jacob Astor should be given in far greater detail. A rather blurred roguery and passion for merchandise and chicane are not sufficiently supported. In the development of real estate, the tremendous lessons given in Homer Hoyt's study of a century of land values in Chicago ought to be utilized. Such an analysis would give life to the development of real estate after the panic of 1873. The threat to the Astors made by Henry George and Father McGlynn is much understated. So is the phobia of revolution that swept America in the 1886 period. It is patent from the text that Mr. O'Connor knows these subjects profoundly, for as one who has worked the same field (New York in the Civil War era) I have been frightened at the convergence of words and images, and one comes to feel that one's learning is now made superfluous. But the foundation of the Astors is ground rent, and the Marxian understanding of rent, more fully explored, can add to the substance and import of the book. Whatever may be added or deepened, the presentation of biography as the record of three-dimensional men and women, fermented by circumstance and shaped by idiosyncrasy, opens new vistas.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

Too Many Hamlets

THIS ABOVE ALL, *by Eric Knight. Harper & Bros. $2.50.*

THE title of this novel comes from Shakespeare's *Hamlet,* the play which endlessly debated "to be or not to be." The hero's lady love was so exasperated by Hamlet's inability to make up his mind that she went mad. The quotation goes, in part: "This above all, to thine own self be true. . . . Thou canst not then be false to any man." Indeed, it is a very apt title for a novel about young men, declassed from the proletariat and crowded out by the bourgeoisie, who float like a million Hamlets above the battle of our time.

Clive Briggs, deserter from the working class and deserter from the army after Dunkirk, begins a love affair with a member of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in a blackout. The Waff, young Prudence Cathaway, is a nice healthy middle class girl who believes all the slogans. Clive is a bitter lad from a

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colliery town, who resents the treatment he received in his poverty-stricken childhood, the education he missed, the opportunities he was denied, and the idea of fighting to the death to perpetuate such injustices. The first meeting of Clive and Prudence takes place in the dark; it is full of challenge and of promise. The two go off to a nearly deserted seaside hotel to continue the argument. In the end, Prudence discovers that she is going to bear Clive's child; a falling wall kills him during an air raid—and the argument is still unsettled.

As an intelligent counterpoint to the main story there is a secondary plot involving a wild western child from America and a feeble Englishman. In its comical speed lies the "anti-romance," which points up the misty-moisty-musty English sentimentality of Prudence, with her "eternal" verities and ineptitudes. Hard-muscled Mary Lachlan would be as much at home in a fascist state as in the sham-feudal cattle kingdom of her grandfather. These chapters contain some extremely shrewd comments on the contrasts between English and American bourgeois civilization. The reader who cannot see their "connection with the story" is indeed a simple soul, content to think in one dimension.

This Above All is an extraordinary book, written out of real and bitter experience. The love story is touching and tough, funny and sad, as love is. The air raids and the anxiety creep up on one. This is no second-hand, warmed-over report; it is life and it is art. So one asks, how is it possible for the author to feel so much—and then no more? to go so far—and then stop dead?

Has the author not yet discovered that a Hitler (or a Mussolini or a Kerensky or a Blum or a Roosevelt) does not change the class foundation of society and hence does not really change anything? Within that unaltered class framework capitalism is ringing all the possible variations on the same old tune, transposing, deleting, slurring over, inverting, searching frantically for some formula, any formula, something to stupefy the people a little longer. Has Mr. Knight not yet learned that a million Clives, each making his separate, bitter, undisciplined protest alone, are exactly what Hitler wants in order to dragoon them into submissive agents or to mow them down singly and helplessly if they resist? What Hitler wants, his disciples of whatever color want too; they come in all shades and flavors to suit every taste and occasion; if the poison won't go down with peppermint, try wintergreen.

Clive died. Is the author dead too? Did he make Clive, his hero, die because he and Clive are both afraid to go a step further, and having said ABC say XYZ? But the Clives who escape death are in grave danger of becoming the British and American fascists, under the aegis of some new "Fuehrer." These young men are disillusioned, they are bitter, they are as honest as they ever got a chance to be; they are sensitive and brave and sick of the filthiness of capitalist life. But what clinic drew Clive's teeth and claws, that he

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GOINGS ON

MARXIST ANALYSIS OF THE WEEK'S NEWS, by Joseph North, editor New Masses, Sunday, May 11th, 8:30 P.M. Workers School, 50 East 13 Street. Admission 25 cents.

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is so pitifully afraid of his fellow worker? He sees what is around him, and he hates it; but his best weapon is gone, his instinct of solidarity with his class, his million-bladed sword. He has picked up instead the lonesome, petty snobbery of a shabby-genteel poor relation. He prides himself on his fear of working class thought and action. Even bourgeois Prudence, with her war baby, is braver and more fruitful than he. Moldy superstitions enslave him: "Who would fardels bear, to grunt and sweat under a weary life; but that the dread of something after death . . . puzzles the will . . . and enterprises of great pith and moment, with this regard their currents turn awry and lose the name of action." This is part of *Hamlet* the author forgot.

How long before the Clives learn to identify themselves with their fellows? How long before they know that they cannot be true to themselves in a world which forces them to be false to every man?

LYDIA GIBSON.

Picture-Book History

THE MORNING OF AMERICA, *by Frank J. Klingberg. D. Appleton-Century Co. $3.*

THIS work purports to be an elementary survey of the history of the United States from 1763 to 1829. It is gravely inadequate and at times downright puerile. The latter characteristic probably derives from Professor Klingberg's effort to "simplify" American history, which leads him to pen inanities like the following description of Oliver Goldsmith's works: "In a delightful poem, *The Traveller,* he tells us that happiness depends upon the control of our tempers. In *The Vicar of Wakefield,* he shows his power as a novelist. In *The Deserted Village,* he tells about the exile of Irishmen from their own homes. And with a play frequently presented today, *She Stoops to Conquer,* he won a dramatic success."

The inadequacy of the volume may be demonstrated statistically. The author devotes fully one-fourth of the book to a description of the military aspects of the two major wars of the period under study, but gives not more than seven or eight pages, *altogether,* to Shays' Rebellion; the farmers' uprisings against Federalist exploitation in Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and Virginia in the 1790's; the enactment, enforcement of, and the struggles against the Alien and Sedition

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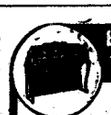
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Acts; and the strike, trade union, and political struggles of the urban workers. Whole pages are devoted to describing the personal attributes of leading individuals like Washington, Hamilton, Jefferson, and Clay, while references to their basic social and class alignments are sporadic and parenthetic. The result is more like a picture book than a history.

A glaring omission is the total failure to devote any space whatsoever to a consideration of *the institution* of human slavery that was so fundamental an element in pre-Civil War America's life. There is no discussion of the role of some fifteen percent of the total population, that is, the Negro people. This is all the more striking in view of the fact that Professor Klingberg does say the Negro "played a major part in the creation of the United States," and later remarks that "his contributions have been immense." Why, then, fail to describe or, at the very least, make some attempt at describing, this "major part" of the country's history, these "immense contributions"?

There are also occasional serious errors of commission. Thus the assertion that the first strike occurred in 1805 post-dates the event by nineteen years. And the remark that Jefferson's original draft of the Declaration of Independence was adopted with "only minor changes" neglects the fact that an entire paragraph denouncing the British government as the abetter of slavery, "the opprobrium of *infidel* powers" (in Jefferson's words), was deleted upon the final acceptance of America's immortal manifesto of revolution.

Little of the light of America's dawning is caught within the covers of this book, and much of what is retained flickers feebly behind a fog of superficialities.

HERBERT APTHEKER.

Brief Review

LOOK BEFORE YOU COOK, *by Rose and Bob Brown. Robert McBride. $2.75.*

To those already acquainted with the Browns' scholarly excursions into the realms of vegetable ancestry and with the wide variety of excellent cookbooks they have published, *Look Before You Cook* is a welcome addition to culinary bibliography. Written with the cooperation of Consumers Union, the new volume contains a practical guide to quality buying, sound dietary hints, valuable household suggestions, and a selection of what the Browns call "basic" recipes which permit many savory meals at very little cost. Very important for these days of rapidly rising food costs are the suggestions for preparing delicious dishes with inexpensive cuts of meat. Included in the guide to buying (in addition to the sections on canned and packaged foods) are grades, qualities, and prices of various brands of household accessories. This is by all odds one of the most useful all-around household books that have appeared in a long time.

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CITIZEN KANE

Orson Welles' "murderous study of the private life of a public egoist" is a magnificent if unfinished portrait, says Joy Davidman. Some new film techniques.

"CITIZEN KANE" is a magnificent if unfinished portrait. Orson Welles went to Hollywood to break conventions, and he has succeeded in finding new and splendid ways of casting, writing, directing, photographing, and cutting motion pictures. He has united an admirable group of actors with a vigorous script and a startling technique. The result makes most experienced Hollywood directors look sick. There is only one fly in the ointment; Welles has not escaped one Hollywood convention, the smirking thesis that the important thing about a public figure is not how he treats his country but how he treats his women.

In consequence *Citizen Kane* is content to achieve a murderous study of the private life of a public egoist. Alleged (we take no chances) to concern a newspaper publisher whom we will not name, the film is calculated to stab its prototype in all his softest spots. Kane's character, built up in what one of the actors calls a jigsaw puzzle method, is presented by sending a reporter, after Kane's death, to interview those who knew him. We see first, a brilliantly handled March of Time sequence of Kane's life as it appears to the general public; then we see him through the eyes of, successively, his banker, his manager, his best friend, his mistress-wife, and his butler. The last piece drops into place, and Kane is summed up as a man who loved only himself, but demanded the love of the whole world as his birthright. His egoism destroys his marriages, alienates his friends, wrecks his political career, and brings him with iron inexorability to his death, a wretched, apoplectic old man alone in a dream castle crammed with meaningless possessions.

The portrait is beautifully done; if Kane were a private citizen, the film would be complete. But Kane is a publisher of enormous influence, an aspiring politician, a captain of industry, a friend of dictators; in short, what Mr. Roosevelt before his apostasy used to label a malefactor of great wealth. This, in real life, is his more important aspect; yet in the film it is given only occasional and casual mention. In two hours there is not one shot of Kane performing any significant political action. He makes love, he makes meaningless speeches; he goes to Europe and the opera; he rushes in and out of newspaper offices. We are told that he exerts great influence on the people of America. But we never see him doing it. True, there are references to his instigation of the Spanish-American War, his hobnobbing with Hitler, his insincere pretense of speaking for the common man. But how does he instigate the war? what is behind his appearance with Hitler on a balcony? how does he betray the common man? There is not even a hint. His only visible violation of journalistic ethics is an insistence upon favorable reviews of his blonde wife's appalling opera singing, and his only political activity seems to be getting caught in a love nest during a campaign. Not one glimpse of the actual content of his newspapers is afforded us. One or two advertised scenes of political relevance, indeed, appear to have been cut out of the picture. As a result the audience is left with a vast confusion as to what Kane really stands for in public life. This grotesque inadequacy in the midst of plenty keeps *Citizen Kane* from fulfilling its promises. In place of an analysis of Kane's true significance, the picture resorts to the trick of giving him a mysterious dying speech, supposed to be "the real clue to Kane," the sentimental explanation of which is coyly delayed until the fadeout.

Considered for its technique alone, however, *Citizen Kane* is worth a couple of visits. Sometimes splendid, sometimes merely showy, it is always interesting. The device of telling Kane's history no less than five times is ingeniously managed to supplement and intensify rather than to repeat. Welles has achieved the miracle of making photography "unphotographic"; instead of the usual unimaginative reproduction of scenes and faces, *Citizen Kane's* camera seizes on a significant detail, emphasizes it in a flash, and swoops on to the next point. Like painting, it stresses the important; like poetry, it suggests far more than it says. Needless to say, this new technique is far from perfect. The staccato brevity of the earlier sequences is painfully confusing, and at times the story seems to be told entirely in a series of montages. There are far too many trick camera angles, too many fantastic combinations of light and shadow, indicating an incomplete translation of Welles' famous stage technique into screen terms. Frequently he lets his showmanship run away with him, preferring to astound rather than to convince. The construction of the film, otherwise magnificent, is weakened by the introduction of irrelevant suspense about the meaning of Kane's dying murmur, "Rosebud." Yet *Citizen Kane,* technically, may well serve to inspire a new school of film-making.

ORSON WELLES *as Citizen Kane*

It is hardly necessary to add that the picture is brilliantly acted. Welles himself makes the overpowering and violent personality of Kane believable. The Mercury Actors are what Hollywood has needed for years; George Coulouris as the pompous banker, and Joseph Cotten as Leland, the honest friend who serves as a contrast to Kane, are superlative where all are good. And Welles' Hollywood discovery, Dorothy Comingore, is the most astonishing young actress since Garbo was a pup. To emotional power and versatility she unites an exquisite beauty as yet unremodeled by makeup artists. Bernard Herrmann's musical score is not the least of the film's distinctions, and Gregg Toland deserves as much praise as Welles for the camera work. The final word on *Citizen Kane,* in spite of its limitations, is that this reviewer is going to see it again—even if she has to pay to get in.

"THE SEA WOLF" might be orthodox Hollywood's answer to *Citizen Kane.* It is a much needed proof that the film industry is not run entirely by Mongoloid idiots with adenoids. Like *Citizen Kane,* it is a portrait of a brutal egoist; where Kane flees from a world he cannot dominate to his palace of Xanadu, Wolf Larsen flees from the same world to his ship, on which he can bully everybody. And, without innovations, *The Sea Wolf* succeeds in being a first-rate picture.

This is due partly to the actors, partly to the suddenly inspired direction of Michael Curtiz, and largely to Jack London. His story is first of all a rattling good adventure tale; but it is also a profound analysis of a bully, and, even more, it is a study in conflicting

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philosophies—the brotherhood of man against the doctrine of the superman. These three aspects of the book have been faithfully preserved in the film. The plot unfolds with speed and tremendous emotional intensity, notably in a sequence in which the ship's pitiful old doctor is humiliated and driven to suicide by Larsen. Wolf, the product of a poverty-stricken boyhood, forever unsure of himself, forever trying to prove his strength through brutal cruelty, and never quite able to justify his own position, is brilliantly dissected. And Wolf, the reader of Nietzsche, is answered by the physical weakling, the writer, who triumphs over Wolf by dying for the decency of humanity.

Edward G. Robinson, with a part he can really get his teeth into, makes Wolf Larsen a convincing brute. Ida Lupino and John Garfield, a pair of escaped convicts looking for a world in which they can be human beings, achieve tenderness and pathos without the least sentimentality, and Garfield, as a man who cannot be broken by bullying, has some magnificent moments. An unfamiliar actor, Alexander Knox, plays the writer with unusual skill and distinction, stealing the show several times from Robinson. Other performances worth mentioning are those of Gene Lockhart, who is heartbreaking as the old doctor, and Barry Fitzgerald, the embodiment of slimy evil as the ship's cook and stool pigeon. The atmosphere of unrelieved gloom, perhaps, is a little overdone. It is hard to believe that a ship can sail 1,500 miles and *never* come out of the fog; but the fog helps the film's symbolism.

JOY DAVIDMAN.

Music of Russia

Shostakovich's quintet performed in America for first time.

PAUL ROBESON sang, and the Shostakovich quintet for piano and strings was performed for the first time in this country. These two items on the program of Russian music given last week under the auspices of the American Russian Institute, were enough in themselves to fill New York's Carnegie Hall. There were other numbers, however, for it was a full and varied concert, representing the works both of Soviet composers and those of older Russia.

The Shostakovich quintet was of great interest. Orthodox in form, it succeeds, through ingenious tonal combinations and original rhythmic devices, in projecting the mood and

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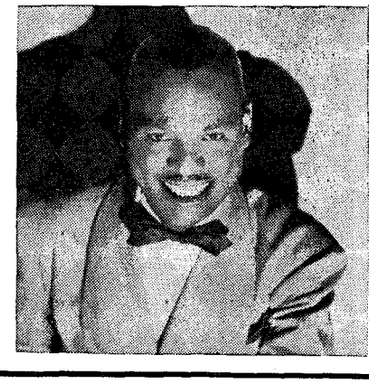

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character of the various movements. The serene, floating feeling of the second movement was conveyed by a masterly fugue written in an almost motionless rhythm. The succeeding movement is thrilling. It races forward with a relentless insistence, accumulating greater and greater intensity. The long cantilena melody in the following movement was of a very superior quality. This work shows the extent of Shostakovich's recent growth as a composer. It is far more consonant and direct, clearer in its structure and development, than many of his previous compositions. While it is difficult to measure the profundity of Shostakovich's ideas at a first hearing, this music plainly reveals an immense energy, resourcefulness, and optimism. It was expertly performed by the Stuyvesant Quartet and Vivian Rivkin, pianist.

When Paul Robeson sings, he stands quite still and uses only the simplest gestures. He brings his warm, friendly personality together with all his emotional force, sincerity, and understanding. The results could be heard in every number he sang. His selections included two excerpts from Dzerzhinsky's opera "And Quiet Flows the Don," a Prokofieff song from "Alexander Nevsky," and a group of folk compositions. The program notes provided by Mr. Robeson best describe these songs: "Artistic in the finest sense—full of folk feeling—rich in social content—intelligible to a vast audience of eager and understanding listeners." A "Hassidic Chant" (from old Poland) found Robeson at his best. Here, as he so often does, he emerged from the realm of mere singing into a mighty figure against oppression.

The concluding ensemble number was the melodious "Overture on Yiddish Themes" by Prokofieff, superbly played by the Roth String Quartet, Andor Foldes, pianist, and Benny Goodman, clarinet.

LOU COOPER.

Censoring the Ether

The radio broadcasters don't like "controversy"—if it's progressive.

THE National Association of Broadcasters, a trade association of big stations and networks comparable to the National Association of Manufacturers, boasts a noble code of standards which each member is supposed to observe. He must see to it that children's programs reflect ". . . clean living and a respect for law and order." He must limit sponsors' commercial plugs to not more than three and a half minutes of commercial talk on a fifteen-minute daytime program. Moreover, he is pledged—and this is the most significant point in the code—not to sell time for the discussion of controversial issues.

The broadcasters are very proud of this regulation. They have ballyhooed it as a fine example of democracy. When the code was first promulgated, a number of liberals ate the bait. The fact that this regulation was im-

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mediately used by NAB stations to rid themselves of the embarrassment caused by broadcasts such as Father Coughlin's, seemed to enhance the NAB's claims of democracy. So far so good. Of course those NAB stations which felt like broadcasting the fascist Father did so and violated the code.

The code provides that NAB members must give free time for the discussion of controversial issues. The reason for this proviso was to give a break to persons and organizations without money. On paper this sounds fine. But the qualifying clause ". . . such time shall be allotted with due respect to all the other elements of balanced program schedules and to the degree of public interest in the questions to be presented. . . ." conveniently permits the station owner to bar anyone whose opinions differ from his own. It's simple: an NAB station just decides that an American Peace Mobilization program, for instance, has not sufficient ". . . degree of public interest."

What's more, in the two years during which the NAB code has been in effect, the non-sponsored controversy clause has been used as a convenient excuse not to sell time to labor unions and liberal organizations. On the West Coast, a CIO broadcast that had built up a large listening audience was kicked off the air, with the blessing read from the NAB code. It happened again in Detroit. The Auto Workers used radio for their Ford organizing drive during the strike, but they were limited to one, small low-power station. Other stations won't sell them time at all.

In other words, "controversy" is whatever the broadcasters define it to be. W. J. Cameron's homespun hokum on the Ford Sunday evening hour weighs down the air waves each week. Such vicious little sermons, of course, are not "controversial."

The latest example of the NAB's righteousness occurred in New York. The Teachers Union contracted for a paid series of programs on WHN, a station owned by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. The teachers wanted to tell the public what they thought of the infamous Rapp-Coudert committee. That sounds like good democracy. But WHN cancelled the program before they even went on the air. Again, the code. Later WMCA, another local station, took the programs but cancelled them quickly when the Rapp-Coudert crowd turned on the heat.

The most nonsensical section of the NAB code lays down the ethics for news broadcasting. "The fundamental purpose of news dissemination in a democracy is to enable people to know what is happening and to understand the meaning of events so that they may form their own conclusions." Good stuff, but here is the joker: ". . . And therefore nothing in the foregoing shall be understood as preventing news broadcasters from analyzing and elucidating news, so long as such analysis and elucidation are free of bias. . . ." And so Winchell, Swing, Heatter, Kaltenborn, etc. pour out assorted brands of warped and weighted "news" in the names of "elucidation" and "analysis."

LLOYD E. TRENT.

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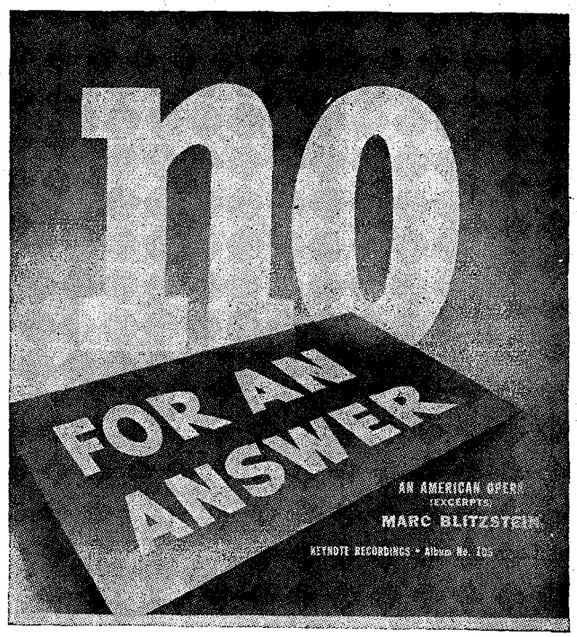

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